THE JAM GIRL

Frances R. Sterrett

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"'It isn't that altogether, although I have a sweet tooth,' he said."

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THE JAM GIRL

BY

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MARY ROSE OF MIFFLIN,
REBECCA'S PROMISE, ETC.

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TO
MY SISTERS

THE JAM GIRL

CHAPTER I

HERE is a train that leaves Lausanne for Paris about half-past ten o'clock at night, and, in spite of the fact that there was not a disengaged berth in the *wagon-lit* and that Judith Henderson was traveling alone, she decided to take it. She was positive that it was necessary for her to be in Paris as early as possible the next morning, and surely she could manage to sit up for one night in a train. Other people did it. And as for traveling alone, hadn't she heard, times without number, that an American girl was safe anywhere? She believed it implicitly because she had never had occasion to doubt it, which, after all, is the reason we believe most things. Judith's courage was that of the American girl who has met with nothing but courtesy for twenty-two years.

She did hesitate a minute when she learned that the night express which came through from Milan was made up only of sleeping cars and second-class coaches. Was she willing to sit up all night in a second-class compartment? She considered the question as she stood before the ticket window in the Lausanne station, tapping the floor with her foot. If she had not been convinced that she must be in Paris the next morning, and if her friends had not gone on to Italy, she would have changed her mind and had her trunks sent back to the Hotel Cecil.

The ticket seller regarded her with the glance of masculine Europe, which is a curious compound of admiration, insolence and curiosity. He knew she was an American, for no European girl of her age and position would travel alone by a night train whether she could get a berth or not; and he had no doubt that she would go. The American girls he had seen in the course of many years' service in the Lausanne station had proved to him that they seldom changed their minds after they had once made them up.

Miss Henderson did not change her mind. Having been assured for the third time that the train was an express, she put forty francs under the wicket. Without taking his eyes from her face, the man made the change and pushed back

a franc and fifteen centimes. The waiting porter took up her bag and umbrella and led the way out on the platform. Miss Henderson followed him slowly until she reached the door, where she gave herself a little shake. There would be other people on the train. There really was nothing to fear.

She was very particular about her compartment, and the patient porter opened many doors and explained the advantages of different *coupés* in rapid French before she was satisfied. The only occupant of the one she at last selected was an elderly French woman, who was already ensconced with pillow and rug in one of the window corners. She opened a sleepy eye to gaze at Miss Henderson, and recognized her nationality as quickly as the ticket seller had done, and for the same reason. Judith smiled at her and motioned to the porter to put her bag and umbrella in the rack. She feed him generously, and, when he had gone, settled herself in the corner across from Madame.

It was a new experience for Judith to travel by night in this fashion, and she looked out of the window with considerable interest. There was much leisurely movement on the platform. The restaurant wagon with its white-aproned attendant moved up and down beside the train, offering

the travelers sandwiches, cakes, fruit, and wine. Judith remembered that she had put a package of milk chocolate, the mainstay of European travelers, in her bag in case she should be hungry during the night, and she shook her head at the man's importunities. The vender of pillows which hung from a wheeled rack was doing a thriving business, and many francs were exchanged for the loan of cushions on which weary heads could rest more comfortably than against the hard carriage. How funny it was to see men kiss each other good-by! Although she had been in Europe for five months she could not yet see two great, bearded, masculine creatures kiss each other on both cheeks without a smile of amusement.

She was so absorbed in what was taking place outside that she did not notice that a third traveler had entered the compartment by the corridor. But as the train started and began to move from the station with that strange absence of noise that is peculiar to European trains, she turned from the window to meet the glance of a young man who had taken a place at the other end of the seat occupied by the French woman.

Her first feeling was one of annoyance that a man was to share the compartment with them. She barely met his eyes before she turned again to the window, which framed only dark, shadowy

outlines now. They were uninteresting, and she looked at Madame, who seemed to be asleep. She was uninteresting also, and, whether she wanted them to or not, her eyes would stray to the other occupant of the *coupé*.

She glanced first at his feet, and gathered confidence at the sight of smart russet shoes. They were plainly of American make and so must be worn by an American. It was comforting, after all, to know that a fellow countryman was there, within reach, if she should want any assistance. And her glance went on up his brown clothes and stopped for a moment at the hands, which were holding a Baedeker, which he was studying as though his life depended upon a mastery of the page before him. There was an odd ring on his finger, a dark topaz curiously carved, and she wondered idly if it was an antique. She liked his hands; they looked strong and capable, well formed and well cared for. Yes, she liked his hands, she decided, as she turned her attention to his tie, which was brown also and had a carved topaz thrust through the silk. She hesitated before she looked at his face; but when a quick glance showed that he was frowning over the Baedeker, she dared a longer one. His face was as attractive as his hands, she thought; not handsome, perhaps; his features were too rugged for

that and his nose a trifle too large; but, for herself, she liked a nose that was a nose. Some men had such snippy, turned-up buttons. The brief glimpse she had of his eyes told her that they were brown, and the curve of his clean-shaven lips hinted that they were a jolly brown. His hair was of a color that must have given him the nickname of "Carrots" when he was younger, but Time had softened it to an auburn that harmonized with his brown clothes. Altogether he looked as she liked to see an American man look: big and strong and clean and capable. She was no longer sorry that she had taken the night express. No matter what happened, the man in the corner would look out for her; and, settling herself more comfortably, she closed her eyes.

When Hiram Bingham no longer felt her curious gaze he lowered the guide book to which he had kept his eyes fastened, and looked at her. And, if she had felt confidence and comfort at the sight of him, he experienced surprise and, if the truth were told, a trifle of disgust at the sight of her. What was she doing in a second-class compartment alone on the night express for Paris? He wished that American girls would not do such things. It only exposed them to ridicule and annoyance and the caustic criticism of Europeans.

She was far too pretty to travel alone, either in Europe or in America. She looked like a child as she sat there, her head leaning against the dingy, hard cushion. She had taken off her hat, and her hair, black as a crow's wing and as lusterless, formed a soft frame around her face. Her skin was as white and fine as a baby's, and under the creamy eyelids were two eyes which had looked black in the brief glimpse he had had of them. There was a tired droop to her mouth, but her lips were exquisitely formed, as was the nose above them. Yes, she was far too good looking to travel alone; and she was too well turned out. Her soft blouse of white crêpe de chine with its plaited frill was fresh and smart. He liked frills. There was something so feminine about them that he wondered why all women didn't wear them more often. Her blue suit had been made by a tailor who knew his business, and the small blue hat beside her was quite as fashionable in its tailored simplicity. Yes, she was very well turned out, a fact which only deepened the mystery of her solitary condition in the night express. Not for a second did he think that Madame, slumbering in her corner, was her companion.

Well, it was none of his business, although it was the sight of her which had led him to choose

this compartment. He also had been disappointed in a berth in the *wagon-lit* and had decided to sit up rather than delay his arrival in Paris. As he had followed his porter down the corridor he had seen Judith idly watching the throng on the platform, and had abruptly ordered the porter to put his things on the rack beside hers. He had caught the dismay in her face, and had had half a mind to tell her that she need not be nervous, that he was Hiram Bingham 2nd, of Waloo, and that he would look after her. But whether he said it or not, he would do it, just as he would want some chap to look after his sister if he had a sister; only he hoped to goodness that, if he had a sister, she would have more sense than to take a night express alone to Paris!

The French woman had watched him choose his place at the other end of her seat with a disgust which she made no effort to hide. If he remained there she could not lie down as she had planned, but when he did not move she stretched herself as well as she could and did not hesitate to push his Baedeker to the floor with the foot she had drawn up on the seat. She did murmur, "Pardon, Monsieur," in a tone that said, "Pig," and he knew that she expected him to move to the empty place across and leave the long seat to her. But he did not do it. He could not watch

the girl by the window nearly so well, and remained where he was in spite of the sniff, which was perfectly intelligible to him, although it was a French sniff.

Through the door, open on the corridor, he could hear a group of Frenchmen in the adjoining compartment talk, with Gallic vehemence, and the smoke from their cigars came to him with acrid sharpness. It must be disagreeable to the women, and he glanced inquiringly toward them. When he caught Miss Henderson's eyes he placed his hand on the door and, at her nod, drew it shut. The French woman was apparently asleep, but she had seen the exchange of question and answer and repeated her sniff. It was as she had thought. The shameless Americans lost no time in beginning their flirtations. She thanked the good God that she was not like one of them.

The train moved along swiftly and quietly. Its first stop was at Vallorbe, on the Swiss frontier. It was almost midnight and there were few people at the station of the little town. When Miss Henderson rose to lower the glass in the door, Hiram was before her and fastened it by the heavy leather strap, while Madame murmured her gratitude to the good God again.

As the train slipped out of the station the guard pushed a man into the compartment with

a muttered excuse. The stranger stumbled over Hiram's feet and all but dropped the huge canvas bag which he carried. He hoarsely whispered, "Pardon, M'sieur," as he put it on the seat beside Miss Henderson. Hiram eyed him drowsily. The fellow looked as though he belonged in a third-class, rather than a second-class, carriage; heavy, stolid, peasant type. And he wondered why the guard had put him there. It really did not matter, he said to himself; he could protect the girl in the corner from annoyance if necessary. The Frenchman down the corridor must have been smoking furiously, for in the brief time that the door had been opened the compartment had become permeated with the smell of tobacco.

He did not know how much later it was that he dreamed that a Swiss porter had dropped the Jungfrau on his left foot and demanded an exorbitant fee for removing it. He was in the middle of a warm argument with the porter when he suddenly realized that it was not the Jungfrau that was crushing his foot, but the heavy boot of the man who had been sitting opposite. He had risen and pushed his way between the two women to stand at the door, his head thrust through the open window. A moment later, with a quick movement, he threw his bag out of the carriage. Another second and his foot was on

the handle of the door. He raised himself and in a flash had jumped out.

"Mon Dieu!" gasped the startled Frenchwoman.

Hiram was on his feet in an instant, and rushed to the open window.

"Don't be frightened," he said breathlessly to the girl crouching in the corner beside him. "The fellow's all right! He fell down, but has picked himself up."

"He might have been killed!" Her eyes were as big as saucers and blacker than ever. "Why did he jump out?"

"You didn't have jewels or anything that he could have taken?" he demanded.

She gave a quick look at her belongings—coat, hat, umbrella and bag. They were all there, and she shook her head.

Madame was regarding them with elevated brows and a nose expressive of much contempt. These Americans! She never could understand them. She had traveled from Lausanne to Paris by the night train more than once, but never before had she shared her compartment with an American girl who looked like a princess and with a peasant who jumped from the carriage window. She was startled into a volubility which finally caused Hiram and Judith to stop looking at each other and to gaze at her.

"What does she say?" The girl was conscious of a great relief that Hiram was beside her instead of some queer, bearded foreigner.

"Something about men and tobacco. By Jove! The fellow must have been a smuggler bringing in cigars. There's a big duty on them, you know. Well, for pure nerve! Imagine jumping from a moving train to save the duty on a bag of cigars."

"And nevaire once to say pardon for hees rudeness for standing before Mademoiselle," broke in Madame. "*Il n'a la politesse.* He is a Swiss," scornfully.

This lack of courtesy seemingly impressed her more than the man's recklessness, and she was still murmuring that he was a Swiss and not a Frenchman, for no Frenchman would have pushed in front of Mademoiselle without an apology, when the train pulled into Pontarlier, the first station in France, and the customs officers entered.

CHAPTER II

IF Judith Henderson had been glad to have an American man share the compartment with her, she was even more glad to have him share what followed, for the customs officers were exceedingly unpleasant and suspicious. Madame promptly told them of the exploit of the man with the bag. She even illustrated it for them with vivid realism, moving from the corner seat which he had occupied to the door, throwing an imaginary bag from the window, and, placing one foot on the handle of the door, she stood poised for a brief second.

"Voila!" she cried triumphantly, before she dropped back to the floor. "And nevaire once did he say pardon to Mademoiselle," she kept repeating, as if that was a greater crime than an attempt to enter France with dutiable goods on which he did not intend to pay duty.

The officers were horrified. They became as much excited as Madame. They sent for more officials, and Judith and Hiram found themselves the center of a rapidly increasing circle of ges-

ticulating and exclamatory Frenchmen, for the other passengers on the train joined the customs officers. More than once Madame gave her realistic representation of the escape of a smuggler. After a long iron rod had been thrust under the seats to make sure that the smuggler had not jumped back again the officials frowned darkly at Madame, at Monsieur, and at Mademoiselle. All of the baggage was ordered from the compartment to the detention room in the station, and, in spite of Madame's angry objections, it was taken there.

Porters and officials gathered around the opened bags, which were subjected to a rigid examination. The French of Judith and Hiram, although the French acquired at Yale and Bryn Mawr, was not sufficient to cope with the situation, and they stood aside while the blue-coated men examined and wrangled over their bags.

"Oh, I'm so glad that you are here!" Judith breathed, rather than spoke the words, and her hand involuntarily touched his arm.

She could not be half as glad as he was, and he told her so frankly, and patted her trembling fingers, and begged her not to be frightened.

"I wouldn't be if it were day, but at night——" she broke off, and shivered as though anything might be expected at night.

He wished to tell her that she must expect disagreeable adventures if she traveled alone at night, but this was not the time for reprimand. It was the moment for comfort. So he said soothingly:

"It will be all right. I am here, you know, even if it is the middle of the night."

And just then a man with little, pig eyes and a snubby nose found the chocolate that Judith had slipped into her bag as a cure for possible hunger. You would have thought it was a bomb or stolen state documents, at least, by the excitement that it caused. All of the blue-coated men gathered about it and talked louder and faster, while a porter, urged by a large coin, artfully held in Madame's fat fingers, slyly extracted her bag, restrapped it, and carried it out. She sniffed and followed him. Never, in all of her life, would she understand the strange ways of strange Americans, and again she sent her thanks to the good God as she stepped into the compartment and wrangled with the porter before she gave him the fee. She had the place to herself now and stretched her limbs luxuriously along the seat. At last she could rest.

"And he nevaire so mooch as said pardon," she murmured as she composed herself to sleep.

A big room for the customs examination of baggage is not a cheerful place, no matter in what

country or at what time, but in France, at midnight, when the flickering gas only made the far corners more distant and shadowy, it was most depressing. The long low tables on which trunks and bags are placed held nothing except the baggage of Miss Henderson and Mr. Bingham, which appeared very small and unimportant to have aroused the interest it had done.

Judith looked at Hiram and Hiram looked at Judith. Neither could understand why a package of milk chocolate, such a package as you could buy anywhere in Switzerland for a franc, should create such a commotion. It was exasperating not to be able to understand what was said, but the officials talked so fast that the American ears heard only a confused jumble of sound. The gestures were more intelligible. But when one of the officers turned to Judith and muttered something and motioned to her to enter another room she turned pale.

"I won't go!" she said to Hiram.

"Don't you do it." He encouraged her defiance. He did not like the official manner. It was most offensive to him. "Let your bag go," he suggested hurriedly. "We can make a dash and catch the train."

It sounded simple. She had only to put her hand in his and run through the open door. But

before Judith could put out her fingers there was a feeble toot from the guard's horn and the night express for Paris went rumbling on its way.

"Oh!" dismay was in Judith's voice. "It's—it's gone!"

"You——" Hiram began in a most furious tone to the officials, who were still muttering over Judith's bag. For the first time he was sorry that Judith was there. He could not express his real feelings to the French customs officials while a woman was present. The suppression of them gave him a smothered sensation which lasted until Judith touched his arm again.

"I'm so glad you are here!" she said again, and there was no doubt that she was sincere.

He was conscience stricken. Poor, frightened little girl! He must not add to her fear by saying the things he wanted to say. He tried to smile hopefully.

"I don't know what they have in their abominable French minds, but we'll see it through together," he promised.

They did not comprehend that neither the flight of the smuggler nor the discovery of the chocolate, each by itself, would have aroused much interest, but that the two coming together had caused their detention, for they were to be held until two of the gendarmes had gone down the

line to see if they could find any trace of the smuggler.

A man at last appeared who could speak a little English. Aided by expressive French gestures, he explained that milk chocolate, like cigars, was dutiable and that "Madame" had been guilty of a grave misdemeanor in trying to smuggle it into France, since she had sworn she had nothing to declare.

"But I didn't know that chocolate was dutiable!" explained Judith, her face aflame. "I meant to eat it on the way to Paris."

He shrugged his shoulders. "If Madame had partaken of it before she came to Pontarlier, very good," and he spread his hands apart to show just how good. "But as Madame did not partake of it, the French government will have to confiscate the little package of milk chocolate," and the hands brought together expressed how much he regretted this action of the French government.

"Good Lord!" muttered Hiram. "Such a row over a package of chocolate. Take it and give it to the government, and I hope to Heaven that it chokes the government," he added vindictively.

The official was undisturbed by the vicious hope. He was used to angry faces and voices. They were a part of the day's work. "Oui,

M'sieur," he said placidly, "we will take it for the government. We are so obligated. And now, if M'sieur and Madame will enter here"—he ushered them into an inner office more comfortable than the big, bare luggage room—"as soon as the gendarmes return I will let M'sieur and Madame know."

Bowing and smiling, he went out, leaving Judith as red as a ripe tomato. She had caught the word "Madame." Did the man think that she was married, the wife of the American who had befriended her? It was most disconcerting. It was even more disconcerting to hear the key click in the lock of the door that closed behind the officer. She forgot to be embarrassed.

"Well, upon my word!" Hiram looked helplessly at Judith. He felt that no expression he had learned at Yale could do justice to the situation. He could only look helplessly at Judith and mutter: "Well, upon my word!"

But now that she understood the situation, or thought she understood it, Judith ceased to be nervous and recovered her poise.

"Never mind," she smiled brightly. "It is unfortunate, but it cannot be helped. And do you mind if I say again how glad I am that you are here? Suppose you had been one of those odious Frenchmen——!" and she shivered.

"That is a risk you take when you travel alone on a night train," he told her gravely. He simply had to explain that it was not wise, but he had his back to her as he did it and poked at the smoldering fire in the big fireplace, for the night was chilly.

She flushed. "I know," with a nod of her head, "I shouldn't have done it, but I did wish to be in Paris in the morning." She smiled ruefully as she wondered what time she would reach Paris now. "I expected to get a berth, and when I found they were all taken I was sure I could manage, anyway."

The explanation was evidently satisfactory, for he swung around and smiled. "It will be all right," he assured her before he told her that his experience had been similar to hers.

The coincidence made them laugh, and Hiram pulled a chair before the fire for her and drew another out of the obscurity for himself. They talked of what might be expected from the dreadful combination of smuggled cigars and contraband chocolate in the same railway carriage, and then found considerable amusement in the official attitude toward chocolate and in the European attitude toward things in general.

Hiram was returning from a leisurely journey around the world, he told her, and Judith had

been in Europe since her graduation from Bryn Mawr in June. She had been with friends and had had a good time, a very good time, indeed. It was just an unfortunate misunderstanding which had left her alone in Lausanne. Her friends had been called to Italy and she was on her way to Paris to meet her father, who was to arrive that very morning, via Cherbourg, and she had not seen him for months.

"He is the dearest father in the world and I felt that I simply couldn't wait to see him. He will be dreadfully angry," and she sighed.

"He need never know unless you tell him," he hinted.

But she shook her head at the suggestion and declared that she told her father everything. "There are only the two of us," she explained, "and he has had to be mother, brother and sister as well as father."

"That is the way it is with me," eagerly. "The Bingham family consists of but one father and one son. It is rather a lonesome arrangement."

"Isn't it?" she agreed. "I never realized it as I did the first month at college, and then I felt as though I had been cheated because I didn't have half a dozen sisters."

"Didn't you want any brothers? I assure you a brother is a useful addition to any family."

"I am sure of it," she laughed, and added more gravely: "And my experience to-night has proved that a brother would be an admirable addition to a traveling party also. No brother could have been kinder to me than you have been."

He colored, and hastened to tell her that it was nothing, that a man would be a brute who would not help a girl if she needed help. They were silent for a moment, both staring at the fire, which had been poked into a more cheerful blaze. The door opened and the English-speaking official, followed by the pig-eyed man, entered.

"M'sieur, Madame," began the former, "the gendarmes have returned, but they found no trace of the smuggler; no trace at all!" He spoke sternly and frowned as though Hiram and Judith were responsible for this failure of the gendarmes. "They did not even find his dead body!" he concluded with awful severity.

"No one but a Frenchman would expect a smuggler to sit down beside the track and wait to be taken," Hiram whispered to Judith. "I told you," he explained to the official, "that I saw the fellow pick himself up and walk away. Are you through with us now?"

"M'sieur and Madame are at liberty." He bowed as if he were making them a rare and valuable present, as indeed he was, for what is more

valuable than liberty? Even the pig-eyed one smiled pleasantly. "All but the chocolate. I am desolate, but chocolate is contraband in France. Madame will have to forgive me, but I must keep the chocolate."

Judith felt that she could forgive him anything so long as he did not call her "Madame" again. The term annoyed her excessively when Hiram Bingham was looking at her, as he was now. She blushingly expressed herself as willing to permit the French government to have the chocolate, and they returned to the big room, where a sleepy porter had already gathered up their bags and stood waiting to be told where to take them. An officer stood at the open doorway, through which Judith could see a street stretch blackly away.

She stopped uncertainly; she scarcely knew what to do. "Is there another train for Paris soon?" she asked anxiously.

They shrugged their shoulders and smilingly assured her that there would be no train for anywhere for hours, and that the train for Paris would not leave until a quarter past ten o'clock.

"Not until a quarter past ten!" she repeated in dismay.

"No, Madame." They bowed in unison and from the waist, as if they were a chorus of human jackknives which were being shut.

Judith turned to Hiram and spoke as if he had not heard. "There isn't a train for Paris until a quarter past ten!" Her lip quivered.

"And a good thing," he declared stoutly. "You will be able to get some rest. You must be dead tired. There is a hotel of some sort?" He turned to the English-speaking official, who told him that there were good hotels in Pontarlier, very good hotels, as good as any in France, except perhaps in Paris.

"M'sieur need give himself no uneasiness; he will be as comfortable at the Hotel de la Poste as in his own home; Madame, also."

Still Judith hesitated. She did not wish to go to a strange hotel in a strange town with a strange man. She would rather remain in the station. But the officials did not want her in the station, and they showed her so quite plainly by locking doors and looking at her with impatience so thinly veiled that it sent her to the door with flushed cheeks. It served her right, she supposed; she should have known better; and never, no, never, no matter how old she lived to be, would she take another night train alone for Paris. But as she looked up into Hiram's face, and saw how worried he was for her, she lost her feeling of embarrassment and dismay and was thankful to her very heels that, so long as Fate had sent her this ad-

venture, she had sent with it this frank, big, clean-looking American to share it with her.

"Very well," she said, with a tired sigh, "as there is nothing else to do, let us go to the hotel."

CHAPTER III

HE proprietor of the Hotel de la Poste was a motherly old soul with three chins, each of which added to the confidence Judith felt at sight of her. She nodded her gray head as though she understood exactly what had happened, although it is doubtful if half of Hiram's French was comprehensible. The forlorn and weary expression on Judith's face, her tired eyes, would have been plain to a Japanese who spoke no language but his own; so would the hand which Hiram suggestively thrust into his pocket. Madame did not seem at all surprised to be routed out of her bed at an unearthly hour by victims of the French customs examination. She smiled sleepily at Judith and murmured: "*Pauvre enfant!*" in a deep, rich voice. She seemed a very haven of refuge and a mountain of safety to the bewildered girl, who was glad to follow her into the dark upper regions of the hotel after she had said good night to Hiram and told him again how very grateful she was.

"And you will breakfast with me here?" She looked vaguely through a doorway into a dark cavern which she knew from experience was one of the arbors in which Europeans delight to take their meals and which are invariably furnished with iron tables and uncomfortable iron chairs, painted green.

"I shall be glad to," Hiram told her promptly and gladly. "At any hour you please."

"Shall we say nine? That will give us ample time to make the train; and I feel that I need all of the sleep I can have." And she smiled wanly.

"I am sure you do." He pressed her hand. "And don't bother about anything. Everything is all right."

He stood looking after her as she followed Madame Jourdan down the black corridor until the bobbing light of their candle disappeared around a corner. Then he told the staring porter to carry his bag to the Hotel de Paris, across the way, where he had to rouse a sleepy man who was not half as pleasant as Madame Jourdan had been, and who was loth to give a room to a stranger at that hour of the night, or of the morning, rather.

The morning was as bright and warm as the night had been gray and cold, and Pontarlier basked in the sunlight. Situated as it was on the

frontier, the town had been ravaged by the wars of the middle ages, indeed it had been almost burned to the ground by the Swedes in the Thirty Years' War. With praiseworthy courage the inhabitants had built it up again, and now it is famous for the amount of absinthe that is manufactured there. A triumphal arch erected in honor of Louis XV still stands at the end of the Grande Rue. Hiram caught a glimpse of it as he strolled over to the Hotel de la Poste. Madame Jourdan was alone in her little bureau, and he talked to her of the arch and of Louis XV and of absinthe until Judith came down, a wonderfully refreshed and radiant Judith.

Round, rosy-faced, three-chinned Madame Jourdan gave her a smiling "*Bon jour*" before she slipped away to summon the waiter.

"I slept like a top." Judith held out a welcoming hand. "I think that it was the thought that you were here, under the same roof, that sent me to sleep. I would have been horribly frightened if I had been alone; but with an American, a Yale man, to take care of me, I knew that I was all right."

He felt a warm glow creep over him at this tribute to his nationality and his college, but he did not think it necessary to explain that he had been no nearer the roof that sheltered her than

the Hotel de Paris, across the way. He followed her into what had been a dark cavern the night before, but what in the light of day proved to be, as they had expected, an arbor with scraggly leaved vines rambling over a shabby trellis. The green painted iron chairs and tables were there, neatly arranged on the sanded floor.

The waiter appeared with a cordial and expectant "*Bon jour,*" and a hope that M'sieur and Madame had enjoyed a night of excellent repose. They assured him that they had, and that it had left them with ravenous appetites, at which he showed all of his big white teeth, like a pleased dog, and nodded as if he understood. And he must have done so, for the Continental breakfast of coffee and rolls was reinforced with a delicious omelet and fresh toast, delicately browned. A pot of preserves was placed on the table as though it were something very rare and precious. Hiram took the old blue jar in his hand and looked at it curiously.

Judith laughed. "You evidently have a sweet tooth and are as fond of jam for breakfast as any Englishman."

"It isn't that altogether, although I have a sweet tooth," he said as he put the jar down, but he did not tell her what it was as he smiled at her across the table.

How lovely she was! Her hat was with her coat on a chair beside her bag, and a stray sunbeam had found its way through the scraggly leaves to make her black hair glisten. This morning her eyes were not black, but gray as the sea on a cloudy day, and as deep. There was something very domestic, very alluring, about her pose and place, and he caught a quick breath as he thought what a lucky fellow the man would be who should have her opposite him at breakfast always.

She looked up, with a laughing reference to the rather hard rolls without which a day cannot begin in France, but as she caught the expression in his eyes her own fell and a soft pink stole into her cheeks.

"I think they only bake once a year." She made a brave attempt to recover the self-possession she seemed to have lost, and said the first thing that occurred to her. "The French are such good cooks I don't understand why their breakfast rolls are not better."

He did not answer her at once. It was hard to speak of breakfast rolls when his thoughts were making his blood move faster, but he did the best he could as the waiter took away their plates and brought fresh toast to eat with the jam. When Judith took a spoonful from the old

blue pot the conserve exhaled a most delicious odor. Hiram sniffed it expectantly, and when he, too, was served and had tasted it he forgot all about sentiment.

"Godfrey! but that's great. I wonder what they call it?"

She laughed outright. "I've noticed that most men are fond of jam."

"We like all sweet things," he smilingly told her, and called the waiter, who informed them that the marmalade which had been so fortunate as to win the commendation of M'sieur and Mademoiselle was "*Raisinée de France.*" Yes, it was made by Madame after a very old recipe. Oh, a very old recipe. It was as Madame's mother and grandmother had made it. He had no doubt Madame would tell M'sieur how it was done. He would ask her on the instant.

"Do you really care to know?" asked Judith, as Louis' coattails flew after him into the hotel.

"I certainly do." Hiram took a second helping. "It's the best jam I've tasted for many a day; different, you know," vaguely.

"But it seems so odd for a man to care how jam is made," she dimpled almost derisively.

"It would be for some men,"—he was unmoved by her mirth—"but for me——" He broke his

sentence in two as he saw the puzzled question in her face and laughed. "The long and the short of it is that I like this jam. Different men have different tastes," he went on. "I have a chum who collects medals. Another man I know has slippers worn by celebrated beauties: he even has the nerve to say he has a sandal which belonged to Cleopatra. And old James Bladon can tell you the culinary specialty of every city in Europe and America. I don't think that jam recipes are any more peculiar or ridiculous."

"I don't either," she agreed.

"I have an old book that I'll show you. It has recipes for all sorts of stuff—a most interesting old volume. I bought it in Italy, which was the home of good cooking, you know. It wasn't until one of the Medici girls married a French king that you heard anything about the French being good cooks. Remember all that stuff you read at college about the banquets of Lucullus and the other old Romans? Italy could give France cards then, and I'm not sure she can't do it to-day. Anyway, my book was once the property of a Medici princess, and is illuminated and decorated as carefully as though it were a 'Book of Hours.'"

"Did you buy it as a curio or are you going to try some of the recipes?" and all of her dimples

twinkled as she thought of him messing in a kitchen.

"That's just it. I'm going to put a good many of them into present-day materials and see what happens."

He spoke so seriously that she was puzzled. The idea of a great, broad-shouldered man like him being so interested in cooking! It seemed effeminate, but there was nothing effeminate about him. She had to admit that, in spite of the fact that he was questioning Madame Jourdan with as much intelligence as the most high-priced chef could have shown.

Madame was much flattered and gratified. "Oh, but yes, M'sieur." To be sure she would share the recipe of the jam of her great-great-grandmother with M'sieur for a consideration. Other people had asked for it, but no one had offered to buy it, and one must live; and she shrugged her fat shoulders. All of the Messieurs and Mesdames who ate of it were loud in their praise; but she had never whispered to one of them so much as the name of an ingredient. M'sieur could believe her. It was the truth, by the Holy Saints! "'*Raisinée de France.*' That is its name, although for myself I call it the King's Jam, for my grandmother composed it—but yes, M'sieur, like a poem—for King Louis XV, of

gracious memory, when he honored Pontarlier with his presence. M'sieur has seen the triumphal arch at the end of the Grande Rue. Ah, yes, it is a good marmalade. Does M'sieur know that it is composed of grapes; yes, grapes, ripe with the sun and heavy with juice. To two pounds of these grapes, M'sieur, take one cup of water, and cook, stirring always until the fruit is soft. The grapes must be of the best and free from seeds and stems. There are no seeds in my *Raisinée de France.* No one can say that there are!" and she bristled fiercely. "Then, when the grapes are soft, like a pulp, M'sieur, you must press them through a sieve forcefully, M'sieur. Then,"—she bent forward to whisper as though she were confiding a state secret—"two pounds of ripe pears, yes, pears!" triumphantly, "peeled and sliced, are stirred into the grapes and cooked until there is but half as much of the mixture as there was. Does M'sieur understand? It is very simple. Then the pulp is sweetened to please the taste and put through the sieve again, as forcefully as before. Then, M'sieur, fill your jars and place them in a cool, dry cupboard, and *voila!* When M'sieur and Mademoiselle desire to remember them of Pontarlier they have only to eat of the King's Jam and they remember. Is it not so? Does M'sieur understand?"

"M'sieur" had followed her as best he could, but he frowned over the directions he had scribbled in his notebook. "Sweeten to taste? That's the trouble with these superfine cooks," he complained to Judith. "Their directions are so indefinite. 'Sweeten to taste.' Whose taste? Mine may call for a lot of sugar and yours for very little." And he frowned again as he tore out the leaf.

Judith had listened with amused interest, her elbow on the table, her chin in the cup of her hand, but now she smiled and held out her fingers. "Let me have your pencil." And, taking it from him, she knit her brows over the scribbled leaf and then wrote out in a most concise and businesslike fashion the formula that Madame of the three chins had just given him, preceding it with both names—"*Rasinée de France*" and "King's Jam." "So that you may take your choice," she said as she handed the paper and pencil to him and slipped his scribble into the little silver purse which hung from the chain of carved silver about her neck. "There you are. There is no reason why you shouldn't have jam whenever you wish."

He folded the paper carefully and put it in his notebook. "Thank you" was all he said, but there was so much gratitude in his voice that she

wondered why on earth he took such an interest in cookery.

She was even more puzzled when they had left Pontarlier and three-chinned Madame Jourdan behind them and were comfortably settled in a first-class railroad carriage. He opened his bag and took out the illuminated volume. It was even more gorgeous than he had said, a beautiful specimen of fifteenth century decoration, and its cover of white velvet bore the Medici arms and was fastened with a golden clasp. Each page was illuminated and the text was printed by hand in red and black. It was far too sumptuous for a mere cook book; only the most utilitarian-minded person would call it that. It made of cookery an art, and it must have cost Hiram Bingham a very pretty penny.

"But it is in Italian!" she cried, after she had admired the decoration and could take time to study the text.

"To be sure it is in Italian. Didn't it belong to an Italian princess? I'll have it translated when I am ready to use it; translate it myself. I've studied Italian." And, just to show her, he pointed to a line which he said meant "Lemon Honey." "I was a shark at Latin, and Italian's easy when you know Latin."

"I suppose so. Father reads it. How he would

love to see this! He is mad over old books, first editions, and that sort of thing."

"I'll be glad to show it to him any time," Hiram kindly promised; and waited for her to name a day.

But she only looked pensive, and remarked that, if they spent the winter in Rome, she might take up Italian.

"Winter in Rome!" Hiram cried in dismay. "I thought you were on your way home."

She was turning over the beautifully ornamented pages of the Medici book, and perhaps did not catch the disappointment in his voice and face, for she answered in a most unconcerned manner: "Dear me, no. Father just landed this morning. We may go on to Egypt. Our plans are not at all definite."

"I see." Hiram frowned as he tried to think that he had not done Egypt justice, and that further research and study there might be of benefit to him. He wondered what kind of a man her father was and decided that he must be a good sort of old fellow if he liked first editions and was her father.

Before either of them realized it the train had slipped past Fontainebleau and was approaching Paris.

"You are sure there is nothing more that I can

do for you?" Hiram stood bareheaded before the taxicab in which he had placed Miss Henderson.

"Nothing, thank you. And I'm greatly obliged for what you have done." She would have said more, but the chauffeur had his own ideas of how long Mademoiselle might converse with M'sieur when she was in his cab, and he started his motor. Hiram's reply was neatly cut in two as the cab dashed into the crowded traffic as recklessly as only a Parisian taxicab can dash.

Hiram stood on the pavement, feeling unaccountably forlorn and deserted. He called a taxicab and told the chauffeur to take him to the Ritz. All the long way from the Gare du Lyon to the Place Vendome he sneered at himself for not having learned more about Miss Henderson. It was all right to be chivalrous, a fellow couldn't be prying and insistent at such a time, but a man could be too considerate. All that he knew of the girl who had shared his latest adventure was that her name was Henderson, that she was an American, a graduate of Bryn Mawr, and that she had gone to the Bristol to meet her father, a man who liked first editions and could read Italian and who had arrived in Paris that morning. It was not much, but many heroes have had less, and, anyway, he could go over to the Bristol after

dinner. It would be no more than courteous to inquire after her.

When he was alone in his room at the Ritz and the man had unstrapped his bag he remembered something that made him take a hurried survey of his possessions. He could not find the Medici book. He felt in the pockets of his coat and overcoat; he emptied out his bag, but he could not find the cook book. He stood in the middle of the room and sent his thoughts backward. The last time he had seen the volume it was in the hands of Miss Henderson. He was positive that he had not taken it from her. She must have it now. Doubtless she had slipped it into her own bag by mistake. There could be no other explanation. It would be ridiculous to think for a moment that she had carried it away intentionally. In spite of his loss, and you would never believe what a pretty penny that cook book had cost him, Hiram Bingham stood there and smiled broadly. Now he had a very proper excuse for looking Miss Henderson up at the Bristol without delay.

He dined alone and, as soon as he decently could, strolled over to the Bristol.

"Mademoiselle Henderson?" The concierge repeated the name after him. "No, M'sieur, she is not here."

"Not here." Hiram had a strange sensation, as if he had suddenly been thrown into a bottomless and boundless sea. "What do you mean? She must be here." He put his hand into his pocket and slipped a coin into the expectant palm.

"Mademoiselle Henderson has been here," the many-buttoned functionary remembered then. "She met her father and they left almost immediately. It is God's truth, M'sieur. Why should I lie to a generous gentleman? They did not say where they would go. I will do my best to find out for M'sieur." His "best" was not at all satisfactory. No one seemed to know where the Hendersons had gone.

"Who is her father? What is his name?" Hiram asked at last, feeling that with a Christian name for Mr. Henderson he would have a better chance of tracing him.

"Her father," repeated the concierge, and he made a great effort to recall it. "But yes, he is M'sieur Horatio Henderson of Waloo, in America. Oh, the funny name, M'sieur, Waloo, in America."

Hiram Bingham stared at him. "The deuce he is!" he said when he could speak.

"M'sieur knows M'sieur Henderson?" queried the concierge, with polite interest.

"Know him?" Hiram's brows were bent into a

black frown. So that girl with the deep gray eyes and the enchanting smile was the daughter of old Horatio Henderson. Indeed the world is small. He had known that for some time. But why in thunder did Fate, just to prove it to him, choose Judith Henderson out of all the girls in the world to share this particular adventure with him? Judith Henderson, old Horatio Henderson's daughter? It was incredible and abominable. And yet there was no reason why the concierge should lie to him. He couldn't know that Horatio Henderson and his father hated each other like poison. But whether they hated each other like poison or loved each other like sugar kisses, he was not going to let it make any difference. He had seen Judith Henderson, and was going to see her again, no matter who her father was.

"The boat train for Calais?" The concierge suggested it so suddenly that Hiram jumped. "It departs from the Gare du Nord at this hour. The friends of M'sieur may have taken it."

"And again they may not," M'sieur answered, a trifle ungratefully. "Never mind, Antoine, I'll find her!" and his voice rang with confidence. "Old Horatio Henderson need not think that he can hide her from me. Why, I must find her to get back my Medici book with all of its jam recipes," and he laughed.

CHAPTER IV

ALOO is one of the enterprising cities that are threaded on the Mississippi River like beads on a chain. It has two special claims to distinction, and the two are so interwoven that the city could not possibly have had one without the other. The first, and most important from a purely commercial point of view, is the manufacture of jam and preserves. Strangers passing through Waloo by train or boat are tantalized by the fragrance of boiling fruits and syrups, and so alluring has it sometimes proved that an occasional traveler has been forced to leave the train or boat and follow his nose to the very door of one jam factory or the other. There is no more jam made in any other city in the United States than in Waloo, and the bottles and jars have made the name of Waloo familiar to families all over the civilized world.

Jam gives Waloo its first claim to distinction, and jam was also responsible for its second claim, the feud that was between Hiram Bingham, senior,

and Horatio Henderson, and which was known and recognized the length and breadth of the jam market. Fifteen years before, Henderson and Bingham had been partners in the manufacture of jam that had an excellent reputation. They did not need a government bureau or pure food laws to keep their jam pure and harmless. They never allowed stewed pumpkin and clover seed, prettily colored with coal tar dyes, to masquerade as strawberry jam. Their strawberry jam was made of real strawberries.

And then, for some reason, neither man could tell you just what it was now, and, if he could, he would be horribly ashamed of it, the partnership was dissolved. Horatio Henderson remained the sole owner of the old plant, while not a dozen squares away Hiram Bingham erected a new and improved factory for the manufacture of jams and preserves. The feeling between the two men, hot at the time of their quarrel, grew hotter and more bitter under the severe strain of competition, until neither could hear the other's name mentioned without growing apoplectic in appearance and uncomfortably warm in temperature. The rivalry between the two jam makers was a joke to the trade, and the day that Bingham's issued a new conserve bets could safely be made that a novelty would appear from Henderson's before

the sun went down. One used square bottles and the other round, one had blue labels and the other red, and each condemned the output of the other as poison, unfit for the stomachs of Christian people.

When the usual spring conserve was placed on the market in April the output of the factories was even, just thirty varieties, and already there was considerable speculation in regard to the fall jam, the thirty-first. A novelty was expected every spring and fall as regularly as new modes in hats and gowns, and as yet the trade had not been disappointed. No one had more curiosity about this thirty-first jam than Horatio Henderson and Hiram Bingham, for not an idea that was worthy of anything but a contemptuous rejection had appeared in either laboratory.

"Oh, what lovely, beautiful eating there is in this world!" exclaimed Heine in an honest outburst, and Henderson and Bingham contributed splendidly to the "lovely, beautiful" food. And they were well rewarded. You would never believe that such fortunes as they had could have been built of jam, it's such spready stuff, and it is true that they had the support of some sturdier material.

Years ago, when they were partners, one of their old employees, a cantankerous creature

without friends or relatives, begged them to buy a section of northern Minnesota land from him. He had discovered that he had tuberculosis and wanted to exchange his title to the land for money that would take him to a warmer climate, and later, when he was through with climates, would give him a funeral that was a funeral and not a charity putting away of his body. It was philanthropy, pure and simple, which made Henderson and Bingham consent; they had no use for a section of northern Minnesota land. But shortly after the poor invalid had his funeral the bread which they had cast upon the water came back to them spread so thick with butter that it gave them indigestion. That northern Minnesota land was as full of iron ore as a pillow is of feathers. It was practically all iron ore, and you know what iron ore is and what it is worth? If Henderson and Bingham had remained comfortably well off financially they might have remained friends, but luck made them rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and they quarreled and the foundation stone was laid for this very story.

Mr. Bingham had but one child, a son, the hero of Pontarlier. After finishing a very pleasant and not unprofitable career at Yale young Hiram had spent a year in the Bingham Jam and Conserve Factory, and then had journeyed leisurely

around the world, tasting and analyzing the jams, conserves and preserves of every land. His observations and opinions were to be embodied in a book, and his father was undecided whether to publish them as a work of art, illuminated on vellum, or as a pamphlet for free distribution. Bingham admired his son enormously. So did any number of other people, for, as you know, Hiram was a big, broad-shouldered fellow, with a frank, good-natured face and a jolly manner that always made friends. What was quite as important in his father's eyes was his interest in the jam factory. He had no objection, no objection at all, to becoming a partner as speedily as possible, which was very satisfactory to Bingham. Hiram admired many things about his father, also, and tolerated the characteristics he did not like, so that the two were very good friends, as a father and son should be.

Mr. Henderson had but one child, also, a daughter. And now you have the characters and material for our story, which will not be as bloody as that of Romeo and Juliet. But you must remember that daggers and poison are not as fashionable in our best circles as they were. Instead of taking a man's life, the twentieth century hero attacks him in an equally vulnerable spot, his business. It is practically the same

thing, for any alert, up-to-date young man who is worthy of being a hero would as soon lose his life as his business. How can he buy Paris gowns and *Peche Melba* for the beautiful heroine if he has no dividends?

Judith Henderson, as you have read, was a graduate of Bryn Mawr, where she specialized in chemistry and made some novel combinations which resulted in strange flavorings, to the amazement and delight of her father, who regarded her with the wonder and admiration that others would give to an eighth wonder of the world. Many people regarded Judith in this fashion, for, besides being the sole heiress to the big Henderson factory, she was, as you know, very good to look at. She showed an interest in the factory to please her father, and found time in the midst of a rush of luncheons, teas, bridges and cotillions to run into the laboratory when she was in Waloo to inquire about new jams and admire old preserves.

It is not strange that Hiram and Judith failed to recognize each other in Pontarlier. Neither had seen the other during the years that change long-legged, self-conscious boys and girls into important young men and women, and their names were not uncommon enough to arouse suspicion. Hiram wondered at that at first, but when he had

counted up all the Hendersons he had met who were not related to Horatio Henderson, and had a neat procession of twenty-four, he came to the conclusion that he was not such a blind ape as some people might think. As for Judith, not even Hiram's interest in the King's Jam had reminded her that her father's chief rival in the jam business was a man by the name of Bingham.

Fate, having kept Miss Henderson and young Mr. Bingham apart for fifteen years, brought them together at Pontarlier, and then separated them in Paris in a way that was bound to make them think of each other.

CHAPTER V

FTER his unsatisfactory interview with the concierge of the Bristol, Hiram made no further attempt to find Miss Henderson. It would be a footless waste of time to look upon Europe as a hay stack and Judith as a needle. She had said she might go to Rome, to Cairo, to a dozen other places, but wherever she now went, eventually she would go home to Waloo.

Hiram was on his way to Waloo himself. There was at that moment a cable from his father at the Ritz, reminding him that he had promised to be home for Christmas, and hinting that if he used moderate speed he could visit the jam centers of France, England and Scotland and perhaps reach Waloo in time for Thanksgiving. Hiram used moderate speed and did reach Waloo in season to share his father's turkey, and make his Thanksgiving a real one. And, what was quite as important, in time to take an active part in putting the thirtieth jam on the market.

The Hendersons had not returned, and, as there

was no immediate prospect of seeing Judith, Hiram threw himself into the study of the manufacture and sale of jams and preserves with a whole-heartedness that made his father rub his plump hands together and chuckle with delight. Hiram was really interested. He had tried many kinds of diversion to find that they all palled in comparison with the great game that Americans call business.

He liked to go into the exhibition room, where were samples of all the different jams and preserves that Bingham's had made, in all the different styles and sizes of jars and pots and glasses. He liked even to hear his father tell the history of each, what chance or study had produced the special combination of fruits, and how the public had received it. Incidentally he heard considerable about Horatio Henderson, who was at times a viper, a toad, a fool, a weasel, a hawk, or anything else that was predatory or menacing. Never once did Hiram so much as hint that he had met Judith, for he was a wise young fellow and did not believe in stirring up trouble when it could be avoided. There would be time enough to tell his father what he thought of Judith Henderson, and until that time came he talked of jams.

This devotion to jam left him little time for social affairs. He refused most of the invitations

showered upon him, but he did go to the cotillion that Mrs. Van Alystine gave after Easter, because Mrs. Van Alystine had been a friend of his mother, and the cotillion was in honor of a débutante daughter whose hair he had pulled many times in her short-skirted, long-legged days. He danced with the débutante, who was much embarrassed by his reminiscences and was positive he must be mistaken; surely she had not scratched his face and pulled his ears.

And then Hiram saw *her*.

She was with Marvin Cullen, and if there was any man whom Hiram honestly disliked it was Marvin Cullen. The two had been at Yale at the same time, and a man can learn a lot about another in four years at college, even if the two are not chums. Hiram remembered, now that he saw Judith with Marvin, that he was a nephew of Horatio Henderson and had gone into the Henderson factory after his graduation. Marvin was ambitious, and his ambitions demanded only that he should arrive at a certain point. He never considered the means he took to reach the point, which may account for Hiram's dislike. He did not trust Marvin Cullen and he could not like a man whom he could not trust. As he saw Marvin with Judith to-night, bits of gossip that he had heard without paying any attention tumbled out

of his memory and arranged themselves in an orderly and legible row in his brain. He squirmed as he read that Waloo expected Marvin Cullen to marry his cousin and share the Henderson factory with her. There was ground for the gossip, more than gossip often has or requires, for Marvin had lived with the Hendersons since his mother's death, and went about with Judith. It gave Hiram a most unpleasant sensation to think of the opportunities Marvin had, and, of course, a girl couldn't see what a "rotter" he was. What chance had he, the son of her father's bitter enemy? he asked himself, and neglected the débutante to watch Marvin's devoted manner as he bent toward his cousin.

Judith was looking very charming in a gown of blue chiffon and satin, and the pearls about her neck and in her dusky hair were no whiter than her delicate skin. It was seven months since they had been at Pontarlier, but Hiram told himself that he had not exaggerated by a hair's breadth her loveliness and charm. She did not see him, and she laughed and talked to her cousin in a way that was very irritating to young Mr. Bingham. He wondered when she had returned to Waloo and vowed that never again would he let business so engross him that he would not know when a girl like Judith Henderson came to town.

At last she raised her eyes to glance carelessly across the room, and she saw *him.*

At that instant two hearts in the Van Alystine ballroom stopped beating and then began again with a mad tumultuousness that threatened to choke two young people. And while their glances held each other, some one—Hiram wanted to find that some one later and express his personal thanks—drew Marvin away, and Hiram, his eyes still holding Judith's, walked across the floor as though he had been hypnotized.

"At last!" He held her hand as though he never meant to let it go. And, indeed, he did not want to let it go.

"Yes." She smiled and tried to speak as usual, but it was difficult while her heart was beating a furious strain that to her seemed loud enough to drown the orchestra, and he held her hand as if it were a priceless treasure. "I wondered if I should ever see you again."

He opened his eyes. "You might have known," his voice was decidedly injured, "that I would find you somewhere and somehow. I went over to the Bristol that night, but you had gone."

"Yes. Father found a message which called him to London, and we crossed that night." So the many-buttoned concierge at the Bristol had been right and they had taken the Calais boat

train. "We were there for a month. It seemed years. Father was busy and I had to go about by myself. Even Westminster Abbey and the National Gallery are more interesting if you have a friend with you. I hate to be alone, not because I dislike myself, but because I like other people. It seems years, too, since we were at Pontarlier," with a frank smile and a pink flush. "Do you suppose that the French government enjoyed the milk chocolate?" she bent forward to ask confidentially. "Do you remember three-chinned Madame Jourdan? She was so good to me. And the quaint old arbor with the sanded floor. And the *Raisinée de France?*" Her smile grew into a laugh. "Have you made it yet?" she whispered.

He started, and his face suddenly became curiously intent. "Godfrey!" he muttered, and was silent for a moment before he smiled and said with emphasis: "It was good, wasn't it?"

"Yes, it was good," she agreed, and both were silent; but the silence was more expressive than many uttered sentences would have been. It was broken by Marvin Cullen, who frowned when he saw Hiram Bingham, 2nd, in such apparently intimate conversation with his cousin.

"Good evening, Bingham," he said, oh, very coldly.

"Good evening, Cullen," responded Mr. Bingham, with even a shade more ice in his suave tones.

Miss Henderson looked at them in quick and pleased surprise. "Oh, do you know each other?" She seemed quite happy to think that they did.

"We were at Yale together," Hiram told her somewhat curtly.

"How jolly!" Neither Cullen nor Hiram looked as though it had been very jolly. "You know Marvin is my cousin," Judith kindly explained to Hiram.

"Yes," was all he said; but Marvin, for one, could understand that the relationship was not a matter for congratulation in his eyes.

"It is odd that I haven't seen you before," went on Judith, wondering why the two men were so curt. "Do you live in Waloo?"

At that innocent question Marvin could contain himself no longer. "Good Lord, Judy! Don't you know to whom you are talking?"

She looked up, indignant at his tone. "Certainly I do, but I don't know whether he lives in Waloo. You never told me where your home was, Mr. Bingham?" She used his name just to show Marvin how much she did know.

"I live in Waloo." Hiram spoke quite calmly. "But what your cousin is trying to let you know is that my father is Hiram Bingham, of Bingham's

Jam and Conserve Factory." To hear him you would have thought the position was similar, if not superior, to that of the King of England or the Emperor of Germany.

Judith shrank back with a startled "Oh!" Her eyes grew large and black. "Not Hiram Bingham!" she begged.

Hiram Bingham, 2nd, nodded firmly while Marvin Cullen laughed.

"Of course his father is Hiram Bingham. And Hiram Bingham is fighting your father and is his bitter enemy. You know that. You've always known it. I don't know who in Heaven introduced you," he went on rudely, "but I should think that anyone in Waloo would know——"

"Marvin!" The word was softly uttered, but it silenced her cousin, who swallowed the rest of his sentence and stood looking as though it had given him indigestion. "My cousin has forgotten himself," she said to Hiram with a little air of dignity that sat charmingly upon her. "I'm sure he doesn't mean to be rude."

"There can be no question of rudeness between a Bingham and a Henderson," retorted Marvin, his nose in the air.

"Nor of impertinence," added Hiram blandly, although his eyes flashed. He deliberately turned his back to Marvin and addressed himself ex-

clusively to Miss Henderson. "Jolly dance, isn't it? It's amazing how girls change. I haven't seen that little imp Alicia"—it was thus he spoke of the débutante—"for years, and then she was an awkward kid who blushed and put her finger in her mouth when she was spoken to; but now"—he eyed her critically as she walked down the ballroom—"I wouldn't be surprised if she became a beauty and a belle."

"She is a dear girl." Miss Henderson also ignored her cousin, who glowered at them for a moment before he turned on his heel and went away. "You must excuse Marvin," she began in a voice that trembled a bit; she was so angry at Marvin.

"Never mind Marvin," he begged. "I know Marvin Cullen better than you do—better than you ever can. We won't talk of him. As long as you are willing to be friends with me I don't care a spiced cherry for Cousin Marvin." The smile disappeared from his face as he said more soberly: "You are willing, aren't you? You won't refuse to speak to me just because our fathers haven't any more sense than to quarrel? You don't know what that experience at Pontarlier has meant to me. Why, I've thought of it ever since, day and night. I dream of it."

"So do I," she admitted in a whisper; and then

she realized what she had said and a delicious color crept up into her soft hair. "I mean that I keep thinking of what might have happened if you hadn't been there." She felt that she had not improved matters much, and stopped in pretty confusion.

"That is what I meant," he said very gravely, although his eyes twinkled. "If you hadn't been there." He became conscious that Marvin was bearing down upon them like a battleship ready for immediate action, and added hurriedly: "Will you dance this with me? You have never danced with me."

She hesitated, and proved the truth of an old proverb, for she let him draw her hand masterfully under his arm and carry her away under Cousin Marvin's very nose. It was a new sensation to dance with the son of her father's bitterest enemy, and, much as she enjoyed it, for he danced as lightly as a musical comedy star, she was conscious of a feeling of relief that her father did not attend cotillions.

Marvin, standing against the wall and impersonating a black and angry cloud, reminded her every time she whirled by him that the relations between the Hendersons and the Binghams were many degrees worse than unpleasant.

The last note of the dance had not sounded, the

whistle of the cotillion leader had not died away, before Marvin was at her elbow.

"Judith," he said coldly, "the car is here. Will you come home?"

She looked at him in surprise. It was not late, but there was something in his manner that told her it would be wise to follow his suggestion.

"If you wish to go, of course I am ready," she said as pleasantly as she could.

"I wish to go." There was a determination about him, a lack of consideration for Judith's wishes, that made Hiram furious. He controlled himself very well, however, and Judith showed that she understood and was grateful for his forbearance. She held out her hand.

"Then I must say good night, Mr. Bingham. I hope to see you again very soon." She glanced defiantly at her glowering cousin. "Oh," she remembered with a little laugh, "I think I have something which belongs to you. Will you come and get it?"

"Judith!" cried her cousin. The very idea of a son of Hiram Bingham presenting himself at the door of Horatio Henderson and expecting to see the daughter of Horatio Henderson was appalling. No wonder he was horrified.

"I shall come with pleasure, Miss Henderson," Hiram told her, calmly ignoring Marvin's emo-

tion. "And I hope to do so very soon. Good night, Marvin," he added curtly.

As he went away with his cousin, as a jailer might have escorted a prisoner, Marvin had a vague sensation that he had not handled the situation as well as he might have done. He had been taken by surprise, but he would do better next time, if ever there was a next time. If he had his way there wouldn't be.

CHAPTER VI

UDITH refused to talk to Marvin as the car carried them swiftly homeward. She sat in her corner, her lips pressed tightly together to keep from saying words that she knew were better left unsaid. As they left the Van Alystines' she had exclaimed, as though the sentence was forced from her: "I should think you would be ashamed of yourself, Marvin Cullen!"

And he had retorted: "I should think you would be ashamed of yourself, Judith Henderson!" And had asked her who had had the amazing effrontery to introduce Hiram Bingham to her when everyone in Waloo knew that an acquaintance between them was impossible. He would just like to know who it was?

But Judith did not tell him. She had told no one of her experience on the night train from Lausanne to Paris which had made Hiram Bingham, 2nd, known to her. She had meant to tell her father the moment she saw him, but when she

reached the Bristol she had found him much disturbed over a message he had received and which necessitated a complete change in their plans. Then had come the hurry and bustle of their crossing to London, where, as she had told Hiram, her father was too occupied with business to go about with her, and she was left alone to visit the Abbey, the Tower, the galleries, or to sit in the Park and remember her recent adventure. And after she had remembered and dreamed, as girls always dream, it was difficult for her to tell anyone. Perhaps she had been stupid, but she had never connected the Mr. Bingham who had been so kind and considerate at Pontarlier with the Bingham Jam and Conserve Factory in Waloo; and now that she knew that he was the son of her father's enemy she was conscious not of a feeling of anger and shame that she had been friendly to him, but rather of one of sorrow that her father's hot temper had deprived him of the friendship of a man so altogether charming as young Bingham. A smile played about her lips, and her eyes softened as she remembered just how charming he was.

Marvin saw her face soften and misread the reason. He put out his hand to take hers, but she drew her fingers away quickly and shrank farther back in her corner. It was very aggra-

vating to Marvin to have to sit silent beside her and watch her expression change, as it did in the dim light. He had no way of knowing what she was thinking but when she repulsed his attempt at friendliness he was willing to wager quite a sum that her thoughts concerned Hiram Bingham, 2nd, and he did not want her to think of any Bingham, either old Hiram or young Hiram. His temper was of a most inflammable variety and it began to shrivel around the edges as the car rolled along and Judith refused to talk to him. By the time the limousine drew up before Henderson's large and rather ornate mansion Marvin was very angry indeed.

Judith would have gone upstairs without more than a cold "good-night," but he stopped her.

"Aren't you going to speak to your father?" he asked sullenly.

She hesitated, one satin shod foot on the step. She always said good-night to her father when she came home from a dance, for Henderson was considerable of a night bird and liked to browse about his library at all hours. But to-night Judith sensed that an interview between the three of them was something to be avoided. She recognized danger signals in Marvin's smoldering eyes and shook her head.

"I'm tired. I'll go right up. You say good-

night to him for me." And she went on, trailing her soft blue skirts after her.

Marvin watched her until she reached the upper landing; then he muttered a word slowly and with much emphasis and went to find his uncle.

Horatio Henderson was in his library, which was all that the most ardent booklover would want a library to be. It was a large room, long and wide and high. The bookcases, which ran almost to the ceiling, were Gothic in line and carved ornament, and the many-colored bindings of the volumes within made them look not unlike the old stained-glass windows of a cathedral. How Henderson sneered at open cases! "I would rather leave my silver and jewelry out in the dust and light than my books," he would say when anyone commented on his closed cases. The tables and chairs were of old oak and also Gothic in design, as was the quaint hood above the huge fireplace where a couple of birch logs smoldered. The Saraband rugs on the floor, all rare antiques, gave the color note to the room, for the rich red background was repeated in the chair coverings, in the cushions in the deep window seats and in the hangings. There were no pictures. "Why should I have pictures when I have books?" Henderson had asked in surprise when some one called his attention to the lack and to

him the mosaic of the books was far more interesting than any painting.

Horatio Henderson was not a large man and, crouched as he was in a big easy-chair beside the drop light, he looked only half as large as he did upon his feet. He had a high forehead which ran away over the top of his head and was bounded by scanty gray hair. His eyes and thin lips warned the wise that he was not a comfortable man to argue with. His hands, too, showed a nervous, irascible temperament. He had been smoking, but his interest in the book he was reading was so great that he had allowed his cigar to go out. The volume was a small one, covered with brocaded white velvet and fastened with a gold clasp, and as he held it under the bright light the illuminated pages sparkled as if they were set with rubies and emeralds and sapphires.

"Hello, Marvin!" Henderson looked up as his nephew stalked in and threw his hat and coat on a chair. "See here. I've found a treasure!" He held the open book toward him. "A cook book, if you can call such a gorgeous specimen of fifteenth century illumination a cook book. It belonged to the Medici family. See the pills," and he showed the coat of arms set in the white velvet. "My Italian isn't of the best and this

decorated stuff is hard to read, but there is enough material here to keep the Henderson factory busy for the next twenty years. Lemon Honey. Rosecleaf Sweetmeat," he read and patted the page with gentle fingers. "Where is Judith?" He realized all at once that his daughter had not come in with his nephew.

"She went up to bed. She asked me to say good-night to you for her." Marvin was still sullen.

"Why didn't she come in and say it herself?" Henderson was sensitive to impressions and he was conscious of a tension which disturbed the peaceful atmosphere of the room. "What is it, Marvin? Anything the matter with Judith?" He laid down his book and rose; and now you could see that there was an air of authority about him, although he was slightly under medium height. In contrast to his uncle, Marvin appeared insignificant and weak, in spite of his extra inches. Marvin was just a blond young man. He did not seem to have any distinguishing feature except perhaps his eyes, which were small and set rather far apart. That might have been the reason that they met yours squarely so seldom.

"Oh, there isn't anything the matter with Judy," he muttered. "I wish she wasn't so stubborn," and he sighed. "Uncle Horry——" he

stepped forward and put his hands on the table and looked across at Henderson—"some one has introduced Judith to Hiram Bingham." If Hiram Bingham had been a woman-eating tiger Marvin could have been no more tragic.

"Well!" The word was curtly uttered, but Henderson's eyes narrowed.

"And the first thing you know she will want to marry him," Marvin went on childishly.

Henderson snorted contemptuously. "Marry old Hi Bingham! I hope Judith has some sense."

"It isn't old Hi Bingham; it's young Hi Bingham."

That was a different pair of shoes; a very different pair of shoes, and Henderson drew in his breath with a sharp hissing sound and brought his teeth together with a snap. "She sha'n't marry a Bingham," he snarled.

"She'll run away with him!" Marvin prophesied gloomily, goading his uncle, intentionally or unintentionally. "You know Judith! When she once gets an idea in her head she'll go through fire and water to carry it out. And I could see, a blind man on a galloping horse could see, that she thinks she is mightily taken with this Bingham. I suppose she fancies it is romantic to fall in love with the son of your enemy. She looks on herself as a Juliet," sneeringly. "I hope you'll

put your foot down at once, before it is too late, and forbid her to have anything to do with him."

Henderson's face twisted with the fierce anger that swept over him. All trace of the dreamy student who had reveled in the beauty of the Medici book disappeared and in his place was a man who had lost his temper. He crossed the room and rang the bell. He did not answer Marvin but stood viciously chewing the unlighted cigar until the butler came to the door.

"Tell Miss Henderson to come here at once," he said sharply.

And again there was silence until the patter of Judith's feet was heard on the polished floor of the hall. She had taken off her evening gown and wore a loose robe of blue crêpe, the color of a chalcedony. She had thrown it over her shoulders when Bunston brought her father's message and was still tying the ribbons as she came in. She knew at once why she had been sent for—that Marvin had told his story; and at first she had been tempted to send back word that she could not come. But that would only have postponed an unpleasant interview and Marvin might make anything out of her refusal. She had discovered long ago that Marvin had rare skill in misrepresenting facts. No, they might as well come to an understanding first as last.

Her face was as determined as her father's when she came in, but as she glanced past him to let Marvin feel the contempt that she had for tell-tales, she saw the old book which Henderson had left on the table.

"Why! where did that come from?" she asked in surprise, and took it in her hands as though it belonged to her.

"Never mind that," her father began, rather impatiently.

"But I must mind it," she insisted. "How did it get here?"

Henderson shrugged his shoulders. "I was lonely after you and Marvin had gone, and roamed over the house in my usual fashion. I went into your room and the book was on your dressing table. It interested me and I brought it down to look at it more carefully. Where did you get it?"

She was not prepared to tell him where or how she had obtained it and she blamed her carelessness for leaving it about as she answered, vaguely: "In Europe—in France."

"I wish to look at it again and hear where you picked it up. Just at present we won't speak of books but about young Hiram Bingham. Marvin says——"

"Marvin!" she interrupted with scorn.

"Yes, Marvin. Your cousin, who kindly takes the place of the brother you have never had. Where did you meet this Bingham? Who introduced you?" he demanded peremptorily.

She was silent. She resented his manner of questioning her, and in his present stormy frame of mind she could not tell him of her experience on the night express to Paris which would have been so disagreeable but for the presence of a man as thoughtful and chivalrous and as good to look at as the young Bingham, whom he sneered at. She would not tell Marvin anyway; it was none of his business. So she kept her lips closed while her father stormed and threatened and Marvin looked as if he would like to storm and threaten, too.

There is some satisfaction in shouting at a person who will shout back, but it only adds to one's irritation to exhaust the vials of wrath on a pretty representation of stubbornness, a girl who listens with white face and lips pressed close together. Henderson stopped at last from lack of breath.

"You understand," he said hoarsely, "that I forbid you to have any communication with this Bingham!"

"I understand that you are acting very unreasonably and foolishly," she answered coldly.

"And I understand that I have Marvin to thank for this tirade."

"I-I-I——" sputtered Marvin, like a soda water bottle, but his uncle interrupted him.

"Yes, you have Marvin to thank, and I hope you will have the grace to do it. You may go now and I trust that morning will find you in a more dutiful frame of mind."

She did not answer for a moment. Never in all her life had she left her father in anger and she could not do it now. In spite of the feeling of injustice that surged over her she had to touch his forehead with her lips. "Don't forget that I am a woman, father," she murmured. "I am not a child to be coerced or threatened." She did not speak to Marvin as she passed out.

"Well, upon my word!" muttered Mr. Henderson, staring at the door as it closed behind his daughter. He felt weak and he propped himself against the table. "This is a pretty kettle of fish! I'd give a thousand dollars if she had never met this Bingham."

"I'd give two thousand!" Marvin doubled the sum with ominous gloom.

Henderson patted his shoulder. "You have nothing to regret, Marvin. You have but done your duty, and, if Judith does hers as well, we have nothing to fear. She will thank you yet.

We must keep her amused, give her something to think of besides this Bingham. I have a mind to take her west. She has never been to California. We might go on to Japan. By George! I'll take her away and she will forget him." He spoke with rare confidence in a combination of change of scene and his company.

"I hope she will." Marvin was not so confident. He knew a side of Judith which her father never suspected.

"That's what I'll do," went on Henderson, with increasing satisfaction. "I'll make her forget him. She can't care anything about him yet. I'll take her west." He was quite pleased at his solution of the problem that had been thrust upon him so suddenly and having solved it he looked about for the Medici volume. "Did she take that cook book with her?" He hesitated as if he wished to send after it, and picked up a paper from the table, a leaf torn from a notebook. There was something written on one side and he made out the words slowly, for they were badly blurred. "*Raisinée de France?* What's that? King's Jam?" His frown was lost in a grin which increased in size as he read: "Two pounds of ripe grapes; one cup of water; boil to a pulp—free from seeds and—skins. Put through a sieve and add two pounds of ripe pears—peeled and

sliced. Reduce one half by boiling. Sweeten to taste and bottle." His voice had risen until now it was a delighted shriek. "Marvin!" he shouted, "do you know what this is? By the Lord Harry! I believe it is our new fall jam!"

CHAPTER VII

THE Bingham residence was about half a mile from Henderson's, on the same avenue, but farther out, so that every time Hiram Bingham went to his factory he had to pass the home of his hated rival or make a long detour. He was too much a man of his age to do the latter and waste time, and if he had to pass Horatio Henderson's he could show his contempt by looking the other way.

The two houses had been built about the same time, twenty-five years ago, when the partnership was a matter of pleasure and pride to the two men. They were so alike that Bingham had laughingly declared that if he ever wandered into Henderson's by mistake he would feel perfectly at home. Henderson had laughed also then, but now if Bingham should wander into his house by mistake he would send immediately for the police and encourage the judge to sentence his former partner to the maximum penalty for trespass.

The original furnishings of the Bingham residence which had been chosen by Mrs. Bingham

as far as the decorator brought from New York would let her choose and which had been regarded by Waloo as a marvel of extravagance and beauty, were almost unchanged. They had been selected at a time when hardwood floors were beginning to be considered more sanitary and quite as desirable as flowered Wilton carpets, and when people were learning to admire the old mahogany that they had sneered at. The big square rooms were really not unattractive in their old furnishings; indeed, they had a certain dignity which was restful and pleasing.

"We will have it all changed from the cellar to the attic when the boy brings his wife home," Bingham had said ever since Hiram went to college. He said it more frequently now and with wistfulness, for he wanted Hiram to marry. He had married when he was a year younger than his son, but then he had not gone to Yale, nor traveled around the world in search of jam novelties, before he began his real business career and assumed domestic responsibilities.

The two men always breakfasted together and it was a substantial man's breakfast that they enjoyed. Bingham had no opinion of a man, an American man that is, who subsisted on meager fare. Coffee, that was half chicory and the other half hot milk, and hard rolls would not fortify a

man against the perils of a day in the business world in his estimation, and so his matutinal meal consisted of fruit, cereal drowned in thick yellow cream, bacon and eggs, or a bit of steak or fish, and potatoes with pancakes or waffles and maple syrup as a finish. And after breakfast the father and son went to the factory where it did Bingham's old heart good and sadly distracted his attention from his work to see Hiram junior at the desk beyond him. Ever since Hiram had been placed in his arms, a red squirming morsel of humanity, Bingham had lived for this time, when he would have his son in the office with him. And there he was, a hundred and eighty-five pounds of as fine a son as a man could wish. Bingham had it in his heart to pity Horatio Henderson, if there had been room there for anything but hatred, because he had only a daughter and would never know the joy of consulting with his own son about jams and preserves.

On the morning after the Van Alystine dance Hiram was late, and when he came into the dining room, as fresh as sleep, a bath, and a shave could make a man, his father was half through his grape fruit, with the newspaper propped in front of him by the sugar bowl.

"Morning," muttered old Bingham, never lifting his eyes from the page, where he was reading

the latest atrocity in the way of investigations by the government pure food bureau.

"Morning," blithely responded his son. "I came near wakening you when I came in last night."

"What did you want?" grunted old Bingham.

"You haven't any idea for the fall jam, the thirty-first?" Hiram answered one question with another.

Bingham pushed his paper away and forgot about government atrocities. "Not a blamed hint. You might think those men in the laboratory were machines instead of human beings. You ought to have something to suggest. I'll bet I couldn't go around the world without getting all kinds of ideas for jam."

"No more could I," grinned Hiram. "I had one last night. It struck me all of a sudden, and if we can put it up so that it is half as good as it was in France it will be a corker. I don't know why I didn't think of it before, for the moment I tasted it I said to myself: 'There is something for Bingham's Jam and Conserve Factory.'"

"The devil you did!" Bingham allowed his bacon to cool while he offered a little incense of admiration before his son. "Well, what is it? What is it?" he went on testily.

"It's *Raisinée de France.* Oh, I know that won't do for the general trade," as his father snorted at the name. "We'll call it King's Jam because it was composed in honor of old Louis XV. How is that for advertising stuff? It's really the best ever, made of grapes and pears. Good? It's delicious! Every taste makes a man want more."

"Stop a minute and write that down," ordered his father with a chuckle. "And give it to Waters when you get to the office. Perhaps he can use it in some of his advertising stuff. Now go on and tell me about this raisin stuff. Where did you find it?"

Hiram colored as he remembered how and where he had found *Raisinée de France,* but he told his father very frankly that he had eaten it at a little hotel in a little French town near the Swiss frontier, and how the woman who made it had assured him, by the Holy Saints, that she had never given the formula to a living soul; that it had been a secret in her family ever since her great-great-great-grandmother had combined pears and grapes in a novel conserve to please the satiated appetite of the French king. He had persuaded Madame to part with the recipe for a consideration and—there you were.

"Good work!" Bingham was never sparing of approval when it was deserved. "Give the for-

mula to Mullins and let him try it out. He will have to use California fruit to experiment with. I say, my boy, there is a benefit in travel, isn't there?"

And all the morning he sat at his desk behind Hiram and admired the set of his son's shoulders, the shape of his head, the color of his hair, in fact the whole one hundred and eighty-five pounds of him, and was thankful to his heels that he had been given the greatest gift a man can have, a good, clever, dutiful son.

Mullins deigned to approve the formula for the King's Jam, declaring it to be the most promising that had yet been presented for trying out. Yes, he would experiment with California grapes and pears and would set to work at once. Bingham felt that Hiram had saved the Bingham Jam and Conserve Factory from disgrace and was grateful accordingly.

If Hiram had been at all inclined to put Judith out of his mind all this discussion about the conserve which he had first eaten with her would have brought her back into it. He could not forget that she had said she hoped to see him soon again and that she had something that belonged to him which he was to come and get. He knew she meant his Medici cook book. He had been right in thinking she had carried it away by mistake. He could

not refuse the invitation of a girl like Judith Henderson; not if a hundred Marvin Cullens had frowned in the background. He did not want to refuse it, and four o'clock found him ringing the bell at the Henderson door.

He smiled pleasantly at the butler as he asked if Miss Henderson was in, and the butler actually smiled back as he said that she was. Hiram handed the man a card. As Bunston saw the name he became apologetic instead of cordial.

"I—I beg your pardon, sir," he stammered, showing much confusion for an imported butler, "but I was mistaken. Miss Henderson is not at home."

Hiram sent him a keen glance. There was something suspicious in the man's embarrassment. He put his hand in his pocket.

"Let me have it straight," he said after two hands had met understandingly. "You have orders to tell me that Miss Henderson is not at home when I call?"

The man struggled between truth and loyalty, but before Hiram could learn which was the stronger and have his suspicions confirmed, Horatio Henderson came out of the library. He stopped short when he saw young Bingham. He recognized him at once. He had the same carriage and set of the shoulders as his father. If

Henderson had met him in the Desert of Sahara he would have known him for Hiram Bingham's son, and how much more easily was he to be recognized in the Henderson hall!

"Mr. Hiram Bingham?" he growled, throttling an impulse to turn Mr. Hiram Bingham out of the house.

Hiram bowed politely. "Mr. Henderson?" interrogatively, although there was no need for interrogation. He knew Horatio Henderson as well as Horatio Henderson knew him.

"Come in here," Henderson motioned to the room he had just left.

Hiram stood aside to give him precedence and then followed the older man, who did not ask him to be seated. Hiram assumed an easy pose, holding his hat and stick lightly in his hand. He waited with disconcerting ease for Henderson to speak.

Henderson found it difficult to begin the conversation. He had never imagined that young Bingham would be such a big, strong, clean-looking young fellow; but no matter how big or strong or clean-looking he was, he was Hiram Bingham's son. That was the fact that counted and that made him forget diplomacy, if he had ever thought of using it, and rush into the heart of the matter at once.

"I don't know how or where you met my daughter, Mr. Bingham?" He waited for Hiram to tell him; but Hiram only stood like a brown statue of Young Courtesy, an expression of polite interest on his face, and Henderson had to continue: "But however or wherever you met her the acquaintance is most undesirable to me and it must stop. Cease, sir!" He brought his closed hand down on the table with a thump that made the magazines and papers dance. "There can be no friendship between my daughter and your father's son. You should know that and she should know it."

"I don't believe in inherited quarrels, Mr. Henderson," Hiram said.

Henderson turned purple. "There is such a thing as family loyalty, sir, in which everyone of decent instincts must believe," he exclaimed. "And I demand it from my daughter. She shall not make friends in the family of a man I dislike as I dislike Hiram Bingham. When I think of what he has done——" he lost his voice completely and pulled impatiently at his collar. It was a full moment before he could go on. "I refuse to allow her to see you! I refuse to allow her to speak to you! And I refuse to allow you to come into this house again!" His voice rose shrilly. "Do you understand?"

As he realized the strength of the animosity

that obsessed the older man, Hiram lost his easy pose and his muscles stiffened. "Your words are plain and clear, Mr. Henderson. They should be easily understood." He spoke slowly, trying to keep a grip on his temper. "And you have a perfect right to say who shall or shall not enter your house. I recognize that. But you haven't a right to say who shall or shall not speak to your daughter. That is her privilege. She isn't a baby, a school-girl. She's a woman and she has a right to choose her own friends." He squared his shoulders and went on: "And I'm going to be one of them. You might as well understand that right now. You can forbid me to come to the house, but I'm not going to give up my friendship with Miss Henderson. It's perfect nonsense for you and father to keep on quarreling like a pair of school-boys——"

"School-boys!" gurgled Henderson, and his eyes bulged dangerously.

"Worse than school-boys," Hiram told him flatly. "If you were school-boys you would be trounced and sent to bed. But as you are grown men you keep on making fools of yourselves. Oh, father is as bad as you are; there isn't anything to choose between you. And you used to be such good friends," sadly. "There isn't any reason why you shouldn't be good friends again. But

if you won't, your obstinacy isn't going to keep me from Miss Henderson. You can lock her up but I'll find a way to get her out. You can take her away but unless you travel by special train you will have me for a fellow passenger. I tell you frankly that I didn't know she was your daughter when I met her and fell in love with her. Yes, in love with her!" he repeated firmly, while Henderson gasped and sputtered. "It wasn't a matter of choice. I'd rather not have fallen in love with *your* daughter, but I couldn't help it, and I sha'n't let the fact that she *is* your daughter make any difference. I didn't intend to tell you this now. I thought I'd let you get used to seeing me around first; but you have forced my hand, and, if you must have it straight, I'll give it to you straight. I love your daughter and I hope to make her love me. And you and father can make the best of it."

Never had Horatio Henderson been spoken to in such a fashion, and the effect was startling. He felt smothered. "You—you——" was all he could stammer. He had no idea that matters had gone so far. It was incredible that Hiram Bingham's son should stand there in his own library—his own library——! and talk to him in such a high-handed fashion. Incredible? It was maddening. He wouldn't stand for it, not for a

minute. He had an overwhelming desire to kick and pound young Bingham, which he mastered only by a great effort. But even if he didn't kick and pound he wouldn't stand for what had been said—not for a moment. "You sha'n't marry her!" he finally gathered voice to say. "I forbid it! Do you hear? I forbid it!"

"Yes, I hear, Mr. Henderson," Hiram answered quietly. He had grown pale and his lips were tightly pressed together and the fingers that held his hat and stick were white at the tips. "But, as I told you, I deny your right to interfere. Your daughter is a woman, a very lovely one, and I'm going to marry her if she will let me."

There was a determination in his voice that sent a chill through the warm blood of Mr. Henderson, but he did not waver or flinch.

"You shall not!" he shouted defiantly.

"I shall!" Hiram was quiet but firm. "And now that you understand my position I shall go. There is nothing to be gained by shouting at each other. You might as well make up your mind to like me, Mr. Henderson—I'm really not half bad—because I think I'm going to be your son-in-law," he finished with a smile that anyone except Horatio Henderson would have acknowledged was winning and went away.

Henderson saw nothing winning in the smile

or in the man. He was stunned. That man, Hiram Bingham's son, his son-in-law? Impossible! Outrageous! The world was turning around him at a fearful rate. He staggered to a chair and fell into it, breathing hard and fast.

Oh, why wasn't Judith a boy and then all of this trouble could have been avoided! If Providence had only given him a son to take his part against these Binghams! He was fond of Judith, he adored her, but she wasn't a son and a son was something to a man that a daughter could never be. Bingham had the best of things always and he groaned as he closed his eyes and tried to shut out the white, determined face of Bingham's son.

What should he do? What could he do? He hadn't helped matters by losing his temper. He must not do that again. He must move very slowly and carefully for he had heard that opposition nourishes love as beefsteak does a starving man. He must be very careful how he spoke to Judith. He groaned at the care that he, the aggrieved party, must take. It wasn't fair. He would ask Judith to accompany him to California on the ground that he needed a change, although he hadn't been home from Europe two weeks. He must not let her imagine that he was taking her away from young Bingham, not for a

moment must she suspect the truth. And once in California he would not bring her back to Waloo until young Bingham was dead or married; he did not care which. He did not believe that Hiram would follow them. He was needed at home to look after his father's jam business. Bingham's trade wasn't what it was and the last time he had seen Hiram Bingham he had thought that he was breaking up. As for him, why he was good for thirty years yet. But what use would thirty years, would forty years be, if they had to be spent in fighting his daughter? He swore at the Binghams, individually and collectively, and at everything and everybody who had aided in producing the present unpleasant state of affairs, except Judith. He couldn't swear at Judith. She had always been docile and obedient; she loved him and would surely yield to his wishes. There was nothing like a loving and obedient daughter.

He was still sitting in his big chair, brooding over what had taken place and luxuriating in the thought of his loving and obedient daughter, when he heard Marvin arguing with Bunston. Marvin's voice was angry and excited. Henderson rose with a sigh. All at once the peaceful atmosphere of his home seemed to be threatened. He could see nothing but argument and dissension, no matter in which direction he looked.

"What's the matter?" he demanded harshly, when he saw his nephew and his butler standing face to face at the foot of the stairs.

Bunston waited for Marvin to speak, but as Marvin did not offer any explanation and Mr. Henderson demanded an explanation, he began, apologetically:

"Mr. Cullen, sir——"

Marvin interrupted him. "Bunston has a package that he was going to mail, Uncle Horatio," he said breathlessly. "Judith gave it to him. It was only by chance that I saw the address." He moistened his lips. "Show it to him, Bunston," he ordered.

Bunston obeyed reluctantly. He had never liked Marvin Cullen and he knew why now.

Henderson put on his glasses and took the package from the butler's hand. "Mr.—Mr. Hiram Bingham, 2nd," he read. His eyes began to blaze under his heavy brows. He felt bewildered and very angry. He bit his lip savagely. "I will attend to this," he managed to mutter. "And remember, Bunston, there is to be no communication between this house and that of Mr. Bingham. Absolutely none! And if Mr. Bingham calls again there is no one at home. You understand?"

"Yes, sir," mumbled Bunston, and he felt very

sorry for Miss Henderson. In his estimation Hiram was a most agreeable and generous young man, worth a dozen Marvin Cullens.

Marvin followed his uncle into the library and the two looked at each other before they looked at the package.

"I wouldn't have believed it of Judith! I wouldn't have believed it," Henderson repeated helplessly.

"I would," Marvin told him sharply. "If you had seen her at the Van Alystines' the other night, dancing with him——"

"Dancing with him!" Henderson cried, in a horror which could not have been greater if he had heard that Judith had danced with a roaring lion or an escaped lunatic.

"Dancing with him," Marvin repeated. "I do think that she should show more consideration for your wishes, Uncle Horry. You told her she wasn't to have any communication with Bingham, and here, the very next minute and right under your nose, she sends him a package. What do you suppose it is?" He was frankly curious.

"Do you think I should open it?" Henderson hesitated.

"I certainly do!" Marvin hadn't a doubt. "She is your daughter. You have every right."

"That may be and yet——" He remembered

Hiram had told him that Judith was not a child. He rang the bell and told Bunston to call Miss Henderson.

Marvin shook his head. "You are making a mistake, Uncle Horry. Judith is headstrong. She'll——"

Henderson turned to him fiercely: "For Heaven's sake, Marvin, shut up! Haven't I enough to bear without listening to your drivel?"

Judith came in all unsuspicious of what had happened. She had remained at home in expectation that Hiram Bingham would come for his cook book. When he did not call, she found an excuse. He would know that her father would not welcome him and had remained away to save her from embarrassment.

When Bunston brought her Henderson's message she thought nothing of it. Her father often sent for her when he came home early and she did not look at the butler to read the expression on his usually expressionless face. Bunston ached to tell her what had happened, but his place was a good one and a chap owed it to himself to keep a good place as long as he could.

"You home, daddy?" she began, and then the smile left her lips as she saw the stormy countenances of her father and cousin. "What is it?

What is the matter?" She couldn't imagine what had made them look so angry.

Her father regarded her sternly. "I hate to think that you would defy me, Judith."

"Defy you?" she repeated, questioningly.

"Yes, wilfully defy me." He pointed to the package on the table. Her eyes followed the direction of his fingers and she colored angrily when she saw to what they led her. She drew herself up proudly.

"So you took that from Bunston." There was a trace of contempt in her voice that made her father wince. Marvin heard it unmoved.

"Yes, I took it from Bunston, just as I shall take anything else of the same sort. I told you last night, Judith, that you should not communicate with this Bingham. I never thought you would disobey me."

Judith was angrier than she had been in years. Her father had never spoken to her in just that way, and she resented it fiercely. She had done nothing that deserved such a tone. She took the package from him and opened it.

"You have no right to interfere with my friends. I'm not a child," she cried. "And I haven't communicated with Mr. Bingham. I was only sending him this."

The paper fell away and Henderson gasped

when he saw that she was sending Hiram the Medici book.

He tried to take it from her. "Judith! are you mad? Would you send a Bingham this? There are recipes for jam here that are worth a fortune!"

"Jam!" All at once Judith understood why Hiram had valued the volume. What must he think of her? She must get it to him at once if it was of value to a jam manufacturer. "You think of nothing but jam," her voice trembled. "The book belongs to Mr. Bingham."

"Belongs to Bingham!" Henderson hardly believed her. "How did you get it? He never gave it to you, all those jam recipes?"

"I didn't steal it!" fiercely. "And it makes no difference how I came by it. It belongs to him and I'm going to send it to him. If there are jam recipes in it, that is all the more reason why he should have it at once. If you call it defying you to send Mr. Bingham what belongs to him, then I am going to defy you. I shouldn't think you would want me to keep it in the house a second! A Bingham book! Oh, it's perfectly absurd!" Her defiance slipped from her and she dashed her hand across tear-wet eyes. "You might think we were back in the Middle Ages."

"I suppose you like to think you are a Juliet," sneered her cousin.

The color flooded her face. She felt as though he had torn open the door of her heart and stamped around where she had not dared to glance. It was with difficulty that she controlled herself to answer him: "Marvin! You are even more contemptible than I had imagined a man could be. How dare you speak to me so?"

Her contempt stung him; so did the color that flooded her face and receded to leave a bright red spot in each cheek. "Because I know this Hiram Bingham!" he said passionately. "If you saw him as I do you wouldn't think you knew how contemptible a man can be!"

She refused to listen to him but began to wrap up the book again, making as neat a package, even with her shaking fingers, as though she had served an apprenticeship as a bundle girl in a department store. Her father watched her, fascinated by her trembling hands. He wanted to forbid her, to take the book from her, but he did not dare. Instinct told him that he had gone quite far enough for one day.

Marvin was not so wise. "I'll show you," he promised thickly, "just what a low sneak this Hiram Bingham, junior, is."

She tied a last knot in the cord and rang the

bell as if she had not heard a word he said. Before her father's angry eyes she gave the package a second time to Bunston.

"You will see that this is sent at once, Bunston," she said.

Bunston glanced at Henderson. "Yes, Miss Henderson," he said, when Henderson did not speak; and his spirit skipped gaily as he went away, although his legs were as staid and dignified as a well-trained butler's legs should be.

Judith turned and looked at her father.

"Judith!" he murmured brokenly. "You have hurt me very deeply."

She put her arms around his neck. "Oh, daddy! Don't let us quarrel over anybody or anything. I love you too much to quarrel with you."

He held her close and his gray head rested against her black one. "Then you will give up this Bingham man?" he whispered in her ear. "You'll promise not to have anything more to do with him?"

She slipped from his arms. "I told you, father, that I am not a child. I have a right to choose my own friends." And without another word she left the room.

Henderson stared at Marvin with miserable

eyes. "Damn these Binghams!" he cried desperately.

And Marvin agreed with him. There was nothing that he would have liked better to do than to damn the Binghams, father and son.

CHAPTER VIII

HEN Hiram Bingham, senior, looked at his mail the next morning he was very much surprised, indeed, to find a letter from Horatio Henderson. He had not seen Henderson's writing for fifteen years, but he knew it at once. He could not mistake that heavy, cramped hand. He had seen it often enough at one time and the sight of it now aroused a strange sensation. Dear, dear! What friends he and Henderson had been! They were inseparable until he discovered, quite by accident, what a snake Henderson was. His experience had proved conclusively that no matter how well you thought you knew a man, you never did know him. Thank Heaven, he had found Henderson out in time and now he could not be deceived again. No, sir! He had learned his lesson. The learning had spoiled as pretty a friendship as was to be found in poetry or prose, but little did Bingham care for that, he was so thankful for his knowledge.

What could Horatio Henderson have to say

to him after all these years? He looked at the envelope on both sides in the senseless fashion that one does an unexpected missive when curiosity could be so quickly satisfied by the simple expedient of opening the envelope and reading the enclosure. But like you and me, Mr. Bingham speculated over the outside of his letter for some moments before he opened it. The enclosure was also in a heavy, cramped hand and it made Bingham speechless. A dull red, that changed in a trice to purple, flooded his face, and he gasped and gurgled as he read the letter a second time.

Sir [wrote Horatio Henderson]:

I find that your son, Mr. Hiram Bingham, junior, is annoying my daughter with his undesirable and unwelcome attentions. I have told him that he shall not see or speak to her, but he has defied me. It is what I might expect from a Bingham. But, under the circumstances, the relations that are between us, I look upon his defiance as a piece of unparalleled and inexcusable impertinence. If you are encouraging him in the expectation that there can be any connection between the two families, I tell you flatly that you are mistaken. There has been too much in the past for there to be anything in the future. And I ask you to make this clear to your son and to keep him at home. Otherwise you must abide by the consequences.

Sir, I remain, Horatio Henderson.

Did any other father of a grown-up son ever receive such a letter from the father of a grown-up daughter? Bingham could not believe the words were actually there, and he read the letter several more times to make sure, and grew angrier with each reading. How dared Horatio Henderson send him such a communication? How dared he insinuate, no, by the Lord Harry! to say in plain words—that his son, Hiram, was not fit to marry the daughter of a Henderson? Hiram was fit for the daughter of the King of England if he wished to marry a royal princess. The girl hadn't been born who was too good for him. It was an insult; an insult to him and to Hiram. As though Hiram would ever look twice at the bloodless, white-faced chit who would be the daughter of a man like Horatio Henderson. The boy had better taste and too strong a sense of filial duty. He would tell Horatio Henderson a thing or two himself, and seizing a sheet of paper, he began the telling without waiting for his anger and disgust to cool. And it seemed as though his fountain pen seethed and boiled as it scratched a hurried way, back and forth, over the paper.

Sir [wrote Hiram Bingham, senior]:

I have received your most amazing communication, and it confirms me more strongly than ever

in the belief that you have lost your wits. My son is a man, and can look after himself. I will not insult him by showing him your letter. He knows that I would never consent to any connection between the Binghams and the Hendersons. He would not think of such a thing himself. Your insinuation that he would shows how little you know of him. The fact that your daughter is your daughter would prevent him from becoming interested in her. If you can't take care of your girl and make her mind, that is your affair. But allow me to say that I am not surprised. As for me, I wish to tell you once for all that I have every confidence in my son.

I am, sir,

HIRAM BINGHAM.

By the time he had reached the signature his tongue was thrust over his lower lip as it must frequently have been when he toiled at his copy book as a rosy-cheeked youngster. He thrust the letter into an envelope, directed it, and slapped a stamp on the corner with relish.

"There, Mr. Horatio Henderson!" he said. "I think I have given you as good as you sent."

But even such a generous present could not make him forget the slight that he felt had been put upon his son or reduce his wrath. He was still at the boiling point when Hiram came in from the laboratory, carrying a saucer in which

was a dark red mixture. There was a broad smile on his face and another, quite as broad, on the face of Mullins, the chief of Bingham's laboratory staff, who was at Hiram's heels.

"Taste this!" Hiram stuck a spoonful of the dark red mixture in Bingham's face. "It's the King's Jam, and it's corking good. Smell it." And the saucer was held under Bingham's nose. "Doesn't that coax you to eat? I don't think it is just the same as it was in France." He frowned at the jam. "But of course using California fruit would make a difference. Taste it."

And whether he wanted to or not Bingham had to open his mouth and let Hiram put the spoon into it. If it had been anything except the new jam and if anyone except Hiram had held the spoon, Bingham would have ordered the saucer out of the room in double-quick time. But when the odor of the jam assailed his nostrils and the taste of it reached his palate, his anger melted before such deliciousness. A man could not eat the King's Jam and remain cross. It was like no jam that had been made at Bingham's; it was like no jam that had been made in any jam factory. Of that Bingham was positive and he allowed Hiram to give him another spoonful.

"We're crazy about it, Mullins and I; aren't

we, Mullins?" grinned Hiram, much pleased with himself at having brought the formula of this delicacy to the factory.

"Do you think it could bear a mite, just a mite, more sugar, Mr. Bingham?" Mullins asked anxiously.

"Not a grain." Bingham was licking his third spoonful. "It's perfect! Absolutely perfect!"

"That's what I say, but Mullins thinks it isn't quite sweet enough. Don't you dare to tamper with it, old man," Hiram cautioned. "When you create a masterpiece leave it a masterpiece; don't make it commonplace."

"All right." Mullins was as pleased as they were. "Then it goes, Mr. Bingham? This is our fall jam, the thirty-first Bingham specialty?"

"It goes!" commanded the captain of the ship, scraping the saucer and handing it to Mullins, who carried it away. Bingham smacked his lips over the flavor which still lingered. It certainly was good jam. "I guess that will make Henderson's people pretty sick." He rubbed his hands together, as he did when he was pleased. And then he remembered what had made him pretty sick. He had said that he would not insult his son by showing him Henderson's letter, but now that Hiram was there and the letter was on his desk, not a foot from his hand, he simply had to show it

to him. Any father would have done so. It was not his fault if Horatio Henderson made a damn fool of himself, he thought, as his fingers moved toward the envelope. He took the paper covered with heavy, cramped writing and handed it to Hiram.

"Read that," he said shortly.

And Hiram read and blushed for old Horatio Henderson as he did so and muttered something under his breath. He felt that Henderson had done his best to spoil the pleasant relations that existed between his father and himself. He read the letter a second time, and wondered how on earth he had better treat it.

"The old fool!" muttered Bingham, whose keen eyes saw Hiram's changing color and who was jealous enough to catch the twitching of the muscles about the boy's lips. He would have been glad to have given a whole boiling of the new jam if Hiram had laughed and thrown the letter aside as though it did not amount to anything. He did not like the way in which Hiram frowned at it, nor the red flush that crept up to the roots of his hair. "I told him he was crazy," Bingham went on, trying to speak with cheerful ease. "I didn't wait a minute before I sent him back a letter quite as good as that."

"I'm sorry you did that, father," Hiram said

gravely, and he did not look at Bingham as he carefully folded Henderson's letter and placed it in its envelope on his father's desk.

"Sorry!" Bingham could not believe his ears.

"Yes, sorry," stoutly. He might as well tell the truth. Henderson had forced his hand and his father might as well know as much as Henderson did. "I'm sorry because I love Judith Henderson, and I don't want anything to increase the hard feeling that there is already between you and her father." And he put his hand on his father's shoulder.

Bingham shook it off as though it burned him. "Sorry!" Could it be his son Hiram, his good, dutiful son, who had said that? "Then the old scorpion was right," he bristled fiercely. "I won't stand for it, Hiram! I've been a good father, given you everything you wished; but I won't have you fall in love with Horatio Henderson's daughter. Aren't there any other girls in the world?" he asked piteously.

Hiram shook his head. "No other girl for me." He was as firm as the rock of Gibraltar. "It's too late to think of other girls now, father. I fell in love with Judith Henderson the minute I saw her. There never was a girl like her. She's —she's beautiful!" he stammered, as he remembered how beautiful she was.

But his father snorted scornfully. "I don't care if she is beautiful,—beautiful as Venus or Helen of Troy or even Cleopatra, she won't do for you, my boy. She won't do!" He spoke with decision and turned away as if the conversation were ended.

Hiram knew that it had just begun. "If you only knew her, dad, you couldn't help but love her yourself." He frowned as he realized how hopeless it was to expect Hiram Bingham, senior, to know Judith Henderson.

Bingham was indignant. "I bet I could help loving her! The idea! Isn't she Horatio Henderson's daughter? That would be enough for me and it should be enough for you. Have you forgotten how Horatio Henderson has treated me? Love the daughter of that reptile? I'd like to catch myself doing such a thing! A poisonous viper, that's what he is. And his daughter——"

"Don't say anything about his daughter, father," Hiram said quietly, but there was that in his voice that made old Bingham stop suddenly. All the fierceness died out of him and when he spoke again it was in a whimper.

"Don't do anything rash, boy," he begged. "Take time to make sure. You can't have known her long. I never heard you speak of her. And you've known me all of your life. Take it from

me: there are lots of other girls as beautiful and good and who haven't Horatio Henderson for a father. You aren't really in love with her; you're just infatuated. I wouldn't be doing my duty by you if I didn't try to save you from a silly infatuation. You are young enough to think it is romantic to be in love with the daughter of your father's enemy, but I tell you frankly that I won't stand for any Romeo foolishness. Horatio Henderson's daughter my daughter—my son's wife!" he shouted. "I'd rather see you dead."

Hiram caught his father's uplifted hand and held it firmly while he looked straight into his father's eyes. "I'm no Romeo, father, except that like Romeo I love a girl well enough to die for her." Old Bingham groaned at the mere thought of his son dying for the daughter of Horatio Henderson. "I've never spoken a word of love to Judith Henderson. She may not care for me; I've no reason to think she does; but I love her and, if I can make her care for me, I'm going to marry her. I told her father so and now I tell you. There isn't any use talking about it any longer. We don't want to say things that we'll be sorry for. We don't want to say any more now—not until you are used to the idea..... What do you think of putting this King's Jam up in old blue jars, like those that are used in

France?" he changed the subject abruptly. "I think they would make a hit. I mean those squat little earthen jars of old blue."

Bingham struggled nobly with his temper. He would lose a good deal if he lost Hiram, he realized that, but he felt that he would almost rather lose his son than have Horatio Henderson's daughter a member of his family. Like Hiram, he knew the value of time; only he hoped to prove its worth in an entirely different way. He was not the type to nag, but neither was he of the type that forgets. Hiram could talk of jam if he wished but he turned to his desk and took up some papers and tried not to see that his hand shook so that he could scarcely hold them.

"You can do as you please," he muttered childishly. "You will do that anyway. My wishes don't seem to have any weight with you."

Hiram held his tongue, but he put his hand on his father's shoulder for a moment before he went back to his own desk. It was hard on the old dad, he was sorry for him. But while his wife would mean a good deal to his father she would mean much more to him and he should be allowed to choose her. She was far more important than his ties, his books, or his cigars, and his father never questioned his choice of those. The old man would have to get used to it, that was all.

CHAPTER IX

HE added strain to the already strained situation between the Henderson and Bingham families produced by Hiram's confession of his love for Judith was regarded with equanimity by only one member of them and that was Marvin Cullen. He was as ready to interfere as was ever Cousin Tybalt to take a hand in the affairs of the hapless Juliet and unlucky Romeo. He looked upon Judith as his property. He always had, ever since he was old enough to understand that some day she would have a jam factory and he would not. That had been his grievance. It was a scurvy trick of Fate not to make him the son of Horatio Henderson and heir to the Henderson factory. Judith would have done very well as Judith Cullen. A girl would not know what to do with a jam factory. But as he had not been born a Henderson and Judith had not been born a Cullen, there was nothing for him to do but rectify the mistake of Providence and make her a Cullen and himself the prospective owner of Hender-

son's Jam and Conserve plant. It was all very well to be his uncle's confidential man now, but some day he must be more, and if a marriage with Judith was necessary to make him more, he was ready to buy a license and a wedding ring at once. He liked Judith; but he was not madly in love with her; he was madly in love with the jam factory that was in her pocket. And he was used to Judith. He had made her mind him when he was a youngster, and he had no doubt that he could manage her as well now. Yes, as long as a man must have a wife she would do as well for him as another. Better, for with her would come the Henderson factory with its trade to the four corners of the world. There was not a sentimental nerve in Marvin Cullen's body. He did not know the meaning of sentiment; he sneered at it when he was in a bad humor and laughed at it when his mood was pleasant.

He was in a very bad humor as he realized the impression that Hiram Bingham, 2nd, must have made on Judith. Why the deuce did the Lord make girls so impressionable? So far as he could see, Hiram Bingham, 2nd, was much like other fellows except that he had red hair and wore brown clothes, while most men had brown hair and wore blue clothes. He would have given a large sum to have learned just how and where

Hiram had met Judith that they could have developed such a friendship without his knowledge. He had never seen Judith show so much interest in any other man, and he realized fully what a spur to this interest was the animosity between Henderson and Bingham. Some time ago, I think, I said that opposition was to romance what a pound of beefsteak is to a starving man, strong and nourishing food, and the observation is as true now as it was then. If the Capulets had allowed Juliet to go to dances and football games and perhaps moving picture shows with young Romeo there would have been fewer funerals in the family. Although Marvin understood this perfectly he yet yearned to put on his hat and go out and puncture Hiram in the best Verona fashion. But as the twentieth century officers of the law do not regard such satisfaction of vengeance in the broad way that Verona watchmen did and Marvin did not care to spend the remainder of his days looking at life through the barred window of a prison cell, he left the sword hanging in his closet where it had been suspended ever since he had resigned his high office of second lieutenant of the Waloo guards of the state militia. He would have to find some other way to convince Hiram that Judith Henderson was not for him.

It would not be easy to do this, he knew, for there was an obstinate strain in the Binghams. Marvin had learned that long ago; but there was also a courteous chivalry, and it was on that that Marvin built his hopes.

Hiram had taken his interview with Henderson and even Henderson's amazing letter with a certain philosophy which was characteristic. It was no more than he should have expected. If he would fall in love with the daughter of his father's enemy, he must look for the path of true love to be rough and full of ruts and stones.

When he received the package which Judith had tied up in the presence of her father and cousin, he opened it eagerly, hoping to find some expression of regret that she had not been allowed to see him. But although he looked at every ornamental page of the old Medici book he could find no message on any subject except jam.

It would only be courteous to let her know that he had received the book but he knew that any note or message that he sent would be intercepted. So he stopped at a florist's and ordered a quantity of flowers sent to Miss Henderson. Flowers carry their own message, and he hoped that she would be able to read in the roses what he wanted her to read in them and understand that he did not intend to give up her friendship just because

her father said he should. He was about to let the blossoms go anonymously when a sudden fancy seized him, and he grinned as he took a card and wrote on it in a fine hand, very different from his usual bold writing, the word "Pontarlier."

"She will recognize that," he said, as he blotted the card, and with another grin, broader and more satisfied than the first, put it into an envelope.

The flowers were delivered while Judith was with her father in the library, before dinner. Henderson took as much pleasure in the tributes to his daughter as she did, and he opened his eyes when the butler brought in the huge box. Judith gave a little cry of amusement and delight as she took off the cover, while her father, with childish curiosity, caught up the envelope which was half buried in the wealth of bloom.

"Pontarlier," he read slowly. "Must be that French cousin of the Smyths'." He frowned at the card. "Once for all, Judith," he went on emphatically, "I must tell you that I will never give my consent to your marrying a foreigner." Henderson was positive that every man who saw Judith wanted to marry her. He didn't see how any man could help it.

She had bent her face low over the blossoms and the dewy petals brushed her cheek and pos-

sibly reflected their own pink color in her face which glowed and sparkled as her father read the name on the card. "Pontarlier. The French cousin of the Smyths'." She knew better, very much better, and a little smile curved her lips as she stood holding the flowers.

They were still in her arms when Marvin came in.

"Hello!" he opened his eyes as wide as Henderson had done. "Going to open a flower shop? What young idiot has parted with a month's pay?" And like his uncle, he put out his hand for the card.

Judith snatched it up with a hint of defiance in the eyes that were raised to his.

Henderson laughed at what he thought was a little display of temper. "I don't wonder she wants to hide it. They are from that French cousin of the Smyths'," he explained. "Pontarlier is the name, isn't it, Judy? I suppose he is a Count or a 'no-account,' rather," and he chuckled at the ancient joke.

"I don't remember any Pontarlier at Smyths'," Marvin said idly.

"You have forgotten," his uncle told him. When once Henderson had an idea in his mind it stayed there and sometimes developed amazingly. Pontarlier to him now was a very real

person. He could tell you all about him. "But never mind, Marvin, I have warned Judith that she is not to marry a frog-eating Frenchman. An American is good enough for her."

"Who ever said I wished to marry a Frenchman?" Judith shrugged her shoulders and tried to speak as usual but it was not easy with that card crushed in her fingers, young Hiram Bingham's flowers in her arms and Marvin's curious eyes upon her. She felt as though he could count every one of the hurried beats that her heart had made since the flowers came. She escaped as soon as possible and carried the blossoms to her room, where she forgot that dinner was served at the Henderson residence at half-past seven o'clock until Bunston, sent by her father, reminded her.

Her cousin Marvin had been in his room in a brown study, also. He did not know anything about this Pontarlier. The Smyths might have a French cousin of that name and the flowers might be from him. He would find out about that. But there was something in Judith's attitude that he did not like. It was almost defiant and defiance should always be nipped in the bud before it can grow into revolt. Yes, if he was going to remove Hiram Bingham, 2nd, from Judith's path he had better do it at once. Nothing would be gained and much might be lost by procrastina-

tion. He had learned that in the days of his extreme youth when he had laboriously formed the words with a sputtering pen and his tongue hanging over his mouth. And one does not forget what one has learned in that way.

Consequently that very evening when he dropped in at the Waloo Club after a musical comedy which contained so little comedy that never for a second had it permitted him to forget the danger that threatened his cousin Judith, and saw young Bingham, he knew that the hour had come. He joined Hiram with a careless remark about the show.

"How's business?" he asked then.

Because Marvin was Judith's cousin Hiram had answered his remark about the show and for the same reason he laughed lightly now, and replied:

"Never better. The world's sweet tooth seems to grow bigger and greedier every day."

Marvin nodded. "That's our experience. People can't put the jam on their bread thick enough. What a lucky dog you are to have a factory like Bingham's for your own!"

"I am a lucky dog," Hiram admitted frankly, "but Bingham's isn't mine, you know, Marvin. There is a Hiram Bingham, senior."

"It's all the same. I say, Hiram," he looked as though he had taken a sudden determination,

—"I want to apologize for the way I acted at Van Alystine's the other night. I don't know what was the matter with me. Yes, I do, too," he corrected himself impulsively. "I wished to protect Judy. I knew how Uncle Horatio would champ when he learned that she had spoken to you. I was so anxious to save her that I was—well, we'll say disagreeable."

"Quite disagreeable," Hiram agreed, and he eyed Cousin Marvin reflectively.

"You see how it was," Marvin went on, more eagerly. Lord, how easy it was to lie! "I wanted to save Judy from annoyance. I have to look after her, you know," with a conscious smile. "I say, old chap, you don't know how I regret this old row between Uncle Horry and your father."

"No more than I do." Hiram spoke somewhat absently. What did Marvin mean by saying that he had to look after Judith? Of course, he had to look after her; he was her cousin, but there was something that was more than cousinly in his manner. Hiram felt this and frowned. "I wish we could put an end to it. It's absurd for two men to carry on a quarrel for fifteen years. I dare say my old man was as much to blame as Mr. Henderson, for even Mr. Henderson couldn't quarrel by himself. Father is quite as stubborn and hot-headed as your uncle. It's deuced dis-

agreeable to have a row like that in the family. A feud makes it awkward for people outside, you know."

"Don't I know!" Marvin spoke with feeling. "You will have to be a wonder worker if you can persuade Uncle Horatio to regard a Bingham as less poisonous than arsenic. It would be funny to hear him rave if it wasn't, as you say, a confounded shame to see a fine old gentleman like him give away to his temper. I wish we could straighten it out. It would be better for business——"

"It would be better for father and Mr. Henderson," interrupted Hiram, for the first time in his life feeling a glow of friendliness for Marvin, he seemed so sincere in his desire to be a peacemaker. "They can't enjoy fighting like two mad dogs. Why, they were friends once, partners. It's ridiculous to have such a feeling between Hendersons and Binghams. But I don't see how we can change it."

Marvin clapped him on the shoulder and there was a flash in his eyes which should have reminded Hiram of Cousin Tybalt's dagger. "Just have patience, old man," his voice was very low and as soft and smooth as velvet, "between you and me, Uncle Horatio won't always be at the head of the Henderson factory."

The words bewildered Hiram. What was Marvin driving at? There was so much meaning in his face and so little sense in his words.

"No, I suppose not," he began, "but Miss Henderson——"

"Judith won't always be Miss Henderson," smiled Marvin, and now there was no mistaking the meaning that he gave to the words.

Hiram felt as if he had indeed been stabbed. "You don't mean to insinuate," he stammered, "you aren't telling me that Judith Henderson is engaged to you?" His surprise was not flattering, but Marvin smiled and nodded as if it were.

"I didn't say it! You can't say I did. It's a secret, you know. Uncle Horry wanted Judith to have a year after she left college before she is married this fall." He laughed consciously. "I'm a lucky man, Hiram," he continued more seriously. "Judith is a girl in a thousand—in a million. I've known her all my life and I'm sure of that."

"And she is engaged to you!" Hiram couldn't believe it. Girls were strange creatures, but, strange as they were, he found it hard to believe that Judith was actually engaged to marry Marvin Cullen even if he did stand there smirking like a hyena.

"I'm a lucky man," Marvin repeated. "But I say, old man, just keep your mouth shut. Noth-

ing is to be said until fall, you know. I don't understand why I told you; perhaps because you were so fussed over the factory; but that will all come out right. And as I did tell you, why, you'll respect my confidence. Don't say anything to Judith unless she speaks to you."

And Hiram, shaking off the hand that felt like a claw on his shoulder, promised to keep his mouth shut. Indeed, he had never had less temptation to open it.

CHAPTER X

UNLESS Judith and Hiram emulated the ancient hermits they could not avoid seeing each other, for they belonged to the same set. So, in spite of parental objection, they had to meet occasionally or withdraw to their caves. Henderson did not ask that of Judith. He had given up the idea of taking her to California; the new jam proved too absorbing. He wished to remain at home and look after it, and Judith had always been obedient. Since he had explained the situation to her, and she had understood how thoroughly objectionable young Bingham was to him, she had not offended her father. There was no doubt that she was a good, obedient daughter, and he encouraged her to accept all the invitations that came to her. The more people she saw, the more places she went, the less time she would have to think of the poisonous son of the poisonous Bingham. He liked to see her in the pretty gowns which cost so much more than his clothes that he used to gaze admiringly at her bills and wonder how one

small girl could run up such a sum. He liked to have her slip in to see him before she went away to a dinner or a dance, and he liked better to welcome her home after the festivity and hear her talk about it. He never knew how often young Hiram was at the same function, for the Bingham name was not mentioned.

Judith usually went about with Marvin, and who could be a better watchdog than Marvin? If Hiram and Judith came within ten feet of each other Henderson was sure that Marvin would show his teeth and growl until Hiram would run away. Henderson had rare confidence in his nephew.

In the afternoon Henderson liked to go out to the Country Club and watch his daughter himself, not from any idea of espionage, but just because it was such a pleasure for him to see her play tennis and golf, for Judith was as fond of outdoor sports as most girls. Henderson did not care for golf except when Judith played it; but he fairly radiated with pride when she played tennis.

It was something of a shock for him to learn that she had been paired with Hiram Bingham, 2nd, in the drawing for the annual tennis tournament, and he had a strong impulse to rush to the officials and ask them who was to blame for such

an outrageous insult. He might have done it if he had learned earlier, for with all the young people there were in Waloo it could not be necessary for his daughter to have for a partner a young man who was so altogether objectionable to him, and consequently must be objectionable to her, as young Bingham. He stood gasping and protesting by the court while Marvin tried to soothe him.

"You can't do anything. I haven't a doubt that Bingham fixed it up, but you can't make a scene here." Oh, couldn't he? "It's only for this afternoon. I don't believe Bingham can play for sour apples and even Judith can't win a double by herself."

"But I don't want her to play with him at all!" sputtered Henderson. "I don't want her to have anything to do with him!"

"Neither do I, but neither do I want the Hendersons to make fools of themselves and have a row here, in the face of all Waloo. Pull yourself together. Your old friend, Hiram Bingham, the first, isn't any better pleased. He looks as if he were going to have apoplexy over on the other side." And Marvin pointed across the court to where Hiram Bingham, senior, did appear to be on the verge of a disaster of some kind as he stood glaring at his son's pretty partner.

At any other time Henderson would have laughed at old Bingham's very evident rage; but when the rage was the result of his distaste for Judith, Henderson could not laugh at him. It was an insult to Judith for him to glare at her as he was doing, and in retaliation Henderson shot most malevolent glances at young Hiram.

Bingham was angry. After what had been said he did think that Hiram might have shown some consideration for him. So he glared at Judith although he grudgingly admitted that she wasn't so bad to look at, considering that she was a Henderson; and he glared even more fiercely across the court at Horatio Henderson, who glared back with such venom that it sadly interfered with the play of Miss Henderson and young Mr. Bingham. Hiram became nervous; Henderson seemed to hold him accountable for all the balls his daughter missed, while Bingham looked daggers at Miss Henderson when Hiram failed in a stroke.

Hiram had been much pleased when he heard that Judith was to be his partner and frankly told her so as they walked out to the court together. She had laughed and said that she hoped he would not change his mind when he saw her play, and then she had done her best to spoil his pleasure by taking the rings from her fingers and

handing them to her Cousin Marvin, who stood by with his best watchdog expression.

"Here, Marvin," she said. "Take care of these for me. I don't like to play with anything on my fingers," she explained to Hiram, who nodded grumpily.

Why hadn't she given her rings to him? He had as many pockets as Marvin Cullen and he was her partner. It would have been the natural thing for her to turn to him and ask him to take care of her rings, but no, she had given them to Marvin. And the little incident made him think, more than all of Marvin's fine sentences, that perhaps there was some truth in his statement that Judith was engaged to him. It was no wonder that his play was ruined, and that Henderson glowered at him from the side and Marvin watched with an impudent leer. It was this leer of Marvin's that made Hiram realize that he was acting like a fool, and he pulled himself together and began to play real tennis.

"You're in splendid form now," Judith said to him admiringly, when he had won the first game after a series of plays that called forth enthusiastic applause from the large gallery. "I was sure we were going to lose."

"And you like to win?" In spite of their fathers he stood beside her and looked into her

eyes. To Bingham he was the perfection of young manhood as he stood there in his white flannels, flushed with exercise and love, while to Henderson he was a red-headed toad, which only shows how differently two perfectly intelligent men may look at the same object.

She glanced at him in surprise. "Don't you? I think everyone likes to win whatever he undertakes. I haven't much patience with a man who gives in at the first hint of defeat."

His eyes flashed as they met hers. Whether she meant anything by that or not he took her words as a direct message and from that moment he did not care a fat blueberry whether she was engaged to Marvin Cullen or not. He would not give her up. It was his duty to save so lovely a girl from a creature as despicable as Marvin Cullen, if he could do it—and he believed he could.

Just then Marvin called to her and she walked over to where he stood with her father and they kept her until play was called. They carried her off after the set and Hiram Bingham, senior, joined his son.

"I never saw you play such rotten tennis," he said in disgust. "What was the matter? Of course, your partner——"

"My partner," Hiram interrupted, his head in

the air, "was the best partner a man could hope to have."

Bingham grunted. He would have liked to tell Hiram just what he thought of his partner. Oh, she was attractive enough, as girls go; she was pretty after a fashion and possibly she had a way with her; but she was only a girl and what was a girl to come between him and his son? And she was Horatio Henderson's daughter, a fact which counted for more than beauty or fascination. It made him mad just to see Horatio Henderson with her. Why should Henderson have a daughter at all? He didn't have one. But, pooh! What was a girl? If she were a son now, like his Hiram, there would be some reason for Henderson to be proud, he thought, as he followed Hiram to the clubhouse, as a faithful dog would have followed him and for much the same reason.

As he went up the steps, Miss Henderson, who had evaded her guardians for the moment, was running down. Her foot slipped and she would have fallen if old Bingham had not caught and steadied her.

"Oh!" she gasped, trying to regain her balance.

"It's those ridiculous shoes you wear," he muttered, "you can't expect to keep upright with such heels. If I had my way women wouldn't go around on stilts."

She looked down at the neat white tennis shoes which showed below her short white linen skirt and which did not have the sign of a heel, and a smile tilted the corners of her mouth.

"Mr. Bingham," she began impulsively,—she had not spoken to him since she was a little girl and had made brief visits to the factory, where he had given her peaches and plums and asked her if she were going to be a jam maker when she grew up,—"I wish you and father could be friends again."

He frowned at her. He felt that it was all a horrid plot against him, and his voice shook with passion as he said: "Then you will have to make your father over, Miss Henderson. As he is now, no man with any sense could be friends with him five minutes." He couldn't trust himself to stay with her another second. He actually found it difficult to be as severe with her as he wanted to be, and with a curt nod he stalked away, leaving her shivering, although it was as warm as a July day usually is and she had been exercising quite violently.

"What is it?" Hiram ran down the steps and joined her. He had watched her encounter with his father and had hoped for much from it. "What did he say to you?"

She drew a long, quivering breath and her lips

trembled. "I—I don't see why he should hate father so," she half-whispered.

"Neither do I." He tried to laugh and relieve the tension of her nerves. "But you may be quite sure that his son does not hate your father's daughter."

Her eyes fell before the fire in his, and again her lips trembled so that he had to thrust his fists deep in the pockets of his coat to keep from taking her in his arms then and there.

"That isn't the same," she managed to say, and the ghost of the smile with which she had greeted his father played around the corners of her mouth.

They were standing at the foot of the clubhouse steps and a good many people found it diverting to watch them, for the Henderson-Bingham quarrel had furnished conversation and situations more or less embarrassing in Waloo for fifteen years. It amused Waloo to see Hiram Bingham, 2nd, and Judith Henderson stand there utterly oblivious of everybody and everything, even the Henderson-Bingham quarrel. That is, it amused all of Waloo except Hiram Bingham, senior, Horatio Henderson, and Marvin Cullen.

"Go and tell her to come here, Marvin," directed Henderson. He was almost beside himself and wished to rush at his daughter and snatch

her from the devouring gaze of Bingham, junior. "She sha'n't make an exhibition of herself any longer."

Marvin did as he was bid; but he accomplished his mission with more success than tact, and Judith was angry as they walked back to her father.

"That's all right," Marvin told her calmly, "but I think too much of you, Judy, to let Hi Bingham make a fool of you. I know him! Didn't I go to Yale for four years with him? He isn't all as nice as you think to look at his outside. He's a sneak," he exclaimed, goaded by the way she elevated her nose and held her head. "And I'll prove it to you."

"You said that before," Judith reminded him, her nose still elevated, her voice very scornful.

"And I'll do it!" he choked. "You just wait and you'll see."

And when they reached home he went at once to his room, where he spoiled many sheets of pretty paper before he had a note written to his liking. But when at last it was finished he eyed it approvingly. "Funny how the members of a family will sometimes write alike," he said, apropos of nothing, and he took the discarded sheets and tore them into infinitesimal bits before he threw the scraps into the waste basket and went down to dinner.

CHAPTER XI

INNER was not a merry meal in the Henderson house that evening. Each member of the family had a grievance, and showed it. After the coffee had been served the two men went into the library and smoked, while Judith slipped into the drawing-room and played music so slow and sad that her father yearned to stop her. It was a relief to everyone when the telephone sounded a discordant interruption to the minor chords. Henderson answered it because it gave him something to do and because he reached the instrument before Bunston did.

A moment later he called loudly: "Judith! Count Pontarlier wishes to speak to you on the 'phone."

Judith's hands came down on the piano keys with a crash. She could not answer. Her heart was in her mouth and had to be swallowed first.

"Judith!" roared Henderson again. "Didn't you hear? Count Pontarlier wants to speak to you."

She found her voice and rose to her feet. "Yes, father," she said, but still she hesitated. She knew so well who "Count Pontarlier" was, and she did not wish to talk to him in the presence of her father and cousin. And yet she couldn't refuse. Her father would insist on knowing the reason, and she couldn't explain.

"Judith!" Henderson called a third time.

She went in reluctantly and took the receiver from him. Her hand trembled a bit and her voice was not quite steady as she said, "Yes?"

Henderson thought her agitation was due to maidenly shyness, and grinned and nudged Marvin behind his daughter's back. If he had known who was at the other end of the wire I think he would at least have snatched the receiver from her, but as he did not know he went back to his chair and his cigar, and listened complacently to what Judith had to say "to that sprig of a Frenchman." Her share of the conversation was not especially interesting. It consisted of a series of exclamations, "Oh, yes!" or "Oh, no!" delivered in a curious, breathless fashion that made Henderson frown suddenly and remember that he had told her she should not marry a Frenchman. She could choose anyone she pleased for a husband but a Frenchman and that young Bingham. Surely that was wide enough range for any girl

Judith's heart had jumped into her mouth again as she heard the voice of "that young Bingham." It was so clear and plain that it seemed as if her father and Marvin must recognize it. In answer to her first "Yes," Hiram had apologized for the name he had assumed.

"I knew I would never get a chance to tell you what I want to if I said I was Hiram Bingham. Imagine your father's wrath. It was to save him from a stroke that I said 'Pontarlier' wished to speak to you. I knew you would understand who that was. I hate deceit as much as you do, but in this case——" He broke his sentence off short and began another: "What I wished to say was this. You know the tennis semi-finals will be played to-morrow, and we will have to play John Keator and Miss Adams. I know how embarrassing it was for you to play with me to-day under the present circumstances, and I wanted you to know that I am quite willing to let the game go by default rather than put you to any further annoyance."

She caught her breath, and instead of being angry at young Hiram Bingham for causing her to deceive her father, she was angry at her father for putting her in a position where Hiram would offer to abandon his chance to win a tournament rather than cause her embarrassment. It was

abominable of her father. It was chivalrous of young Bingham—just what she would have expected of him.

"It is just as you say," Hiram went on. "I can be called to Chicago as well as not."

"Oh, no!" she stammered, unable to tell him what she really thought because four sharp eyes were on her back and four quick ears were hearing every word she said.

"You are sure?" And there was a triumphant ring in his voice that made Judith raise her hand involuntarily and put it over the mouthpiece of the instrument. Surely her father and Marvin would hear that and recognize the speaker. No one could mistake young Hiram Bingham's voice when he spoke like that.

"Quite sure," she said, and added, more lightly: "Then I shall see you to-morrow?"

"You surely will!" he responded with flattering heartiness. "And we will beat Keator and Miss Adams to a jelly."

"Not quite as bad as that," she laughed nervously. "Good night."

"Good night." Hiram's farewell was uttered reluctantly. He was willing to talk to her all the evening that way, as he was not permitted to come nearer; but she could not speak to him a moment longer with her father and Marvin, all

ears and eyes, behind her. At the risk of appearing brusque, she had to hang up the receiver.

As she turned around her father asked: "What did the little Count want?"—not from any desire to be inquisitive, but because he had always asked Judith what her friends wanted and she had always told him.

She did not look at him as her fingers straightened the magazines on the table. "To ask about the tennis to-morrow," she could answer truthfully.

"Do you have to play with that Bingham brute again?" Henderson demanded quickly. "It was an outrage to ask you to play with him to-day. I wouldn't stand for it, Judy. What do the officials mean? Tell them your father objects. They'll understand. I guess there isn't anyone in Waloo who won't understand," with a certain grim appreciation of the fact that his quarrel with Hiram Bingham, senior, was so well known and recognized in Waloo.

Judith shook her head. "I can't upset the whole tournament. I shall have to play with Mr. Bingham until we are beaten."

"Then I hope to Heaven you are beaten the first thing in the morning! It made me sick, absolutely sick, to see you stand up beside him, Judy," he added pathetically. "I'd rather see you play

with the Frenchman, that Pontarlier, even if he doesn't know a racket from a snow shovel."

Judith shrugged her shoulders, but, before she could speak, Marvin, who had been watching her closely, took his cigar from his mouth and said lazily:

"Funny I haven't seen that French cousin of Gertie Smyth's. What does he look like, Judith? Was he at the club this afternoon?"

Now, Judith hated a lie as she did stewed prunes, so she promptly answered, "Yes," and waited for the consequences.

"Whom was he with? What does he look like?" persisted her cousin.

She turned away impatiently. "How can I tell? A man is with a dozen people in the course of an afternoon at the club. And as for looks, why, he looks——" She hesitated; she had been about to say like any other man, but he didn't. "Count Pontarlier" did not look like any man she had ever seen.

"It's hard to describe those Frenchies," her father came to her rescue, although he would have been much surprised to know it. "Point him out to me to-morrow, Judy. I'd like to see the chap who sends my girl an entire greenhouse."

Judith turned cold to think what her father would say when he knew that "Count Pontarlier"

and Hiram Bingham, 2nd, were one and the same person. She just had to lie, no matter how she hated it. "He doesn't expect to be there," she said quickly. "That was why he called me up. I think"—she stammered, but having scamped the truth once it came easier the second time—"that he is going back to France." Now it was Hiram she was angry with for creating a situation which made her tell lies to her father. It was all Hiram's fault, of course.

Marvin's eyes were half closed as he watched her. "I wish Hi Bingham, junior, would go back to France with him," he remarked carelessly; but he did not fail to observe that she stiffened suddenly and sent him a quick, questioning glance before she went back to the piano and played music that was so sad and beautiful that it made Henderson wish to weep or swear, he wasn't sure which.

Judith had no opportunity to speak to Hiram until they were on the tennis court in the presence of a hundred or more of Waloo's best people. Public as it was, she might never have another chance, and she took advantage of it at once.

"I wish you wouldn't send me flowers or telephone to me under an assumed name, Mr. Bingham," she began, and there was a red flag in each cheek, a danger signal.

He understood exactly how she felt, and said so. "It is rotten. I don't know why I did it the first time, except that whenever I see you or think of you I remember that jolly time at Pontarlier. We didn't know then that the quarrel of the fathers would make life hard for the children, did we? And last night? I told you why I did it last night."

"Yes, you told me," shortly. But he looked so depressed that she had to add: "It was very thoughtful of you to offer to give up the game, but"—and now she looked straight into his brown eyes, while Horatio Henderson on one side of the court and Hiram Bingham on the other wondered what on earth she was saying to him—"I can't deceive my father."

He looked down into the gray depths of her eyes and his mouth softened in a smile that was wonderfully tender, and which irritated two old men beyond measure. "Bless your heart, I don't want you to deceive your father."

Henderson could not stand it any longer. He simply had to interrupt them, to keep his daughter from making a fool of herself before the eyes of Waloo.

"Oh, Judith!" he called, and, to the great amusement of the people near him, he had to call more than once. When at last he had attracted

her attention, and she came to him, he could think of nothing to say but, "Is that Pontarlier chap here?"

She flushed, and involuntarily her eyes went back to Hiram as he stood on the service line in his white clothes, his sleeves rolled up above his muscular forearms, a tie of his favorite brown the only color about him.

"I—I——" she stammered, when, luckily for her, play was called, and she could go back to the court without answering him.

She was so conscious and nervous that she played a wretched game. All around the court people whispered: "What is the matter with Judith Henderson? She usually plays such good tennis"; or the men said plainly, "She's in rotten form to-day." Some of them put the blame on the fact that she was playing with the son of her father's enemy, and others did not see how she could get a ball with her father and Hiram's father glowering across the courts.

It was Hiram who redeemed her bad plays and made so many wonderful ones for himself that they won the set. To be sure, it was by a very small score, but, small as it was, it gave them the victory, and a victory to-day meant that there would be another game the next day, when the finals would be played.

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"I hope our fathers won't die of suppressed rage before the tournament is over," Hiram whispered. "Although I don't know as they are suppressing much. You feel the warmth of their wrath if you run between them. What is the matter with them, anyway? They are sane enough on every other point; but on the subject of the Binghams and the Hendersons they are raving lunatics."

"I know," she nodded ruefully. "I have done my best to be a peacemaker."

"So have I! We haven't succeeded very well, have we? We'll have to try something else."

"For instance?"

He laughed and showed his white, strong, even teeth. "Do you want me to tell you here and now?" And he waved his racket toward the interested gallery.

The flash of his eyes sent her into a panic and quite a foot further from him. "Oh, no!" hastily. "Imagine telling secrets on a tennis court in the middle of a tournament."

"I'd tell them on a baseball diamond in the middle of a league game if I couldn't get any other chance," he answered quickly. "Forewarned is forearmed," he continued with a significance that made her look at him with a half-frightened glance.

It was Marvin who interrupted them then, and for once Judith did not resent the interruption. She felt—she hardly knew what she felt; but the battle between her loyalty to her father and her right to choose her own friends was proving very wearing on her.

"What a cur that Bingham is!" Marvin said pleasantly, as, after the set, they walked to the clubhouse for something that would be cool to drink. "A man with any fine feeling wouldn't make you as conspicuous as he does."

"A man with any fine feeling wouldn't run down his college chum behind his back!" she retorted.

"Much you know what a man would do. And as for chums, Bingham was never a chum of mine: I don't chum with a fellow who is sneaky and underhand."

She flew to Hiram's defense and added fuel to her cousin's wrath. "I don't believe that Mr. Bingham is sneaky and underhand in spite of your horrid hints and insinuations."

"You've said that before, and I've said that he was and that I would prove it to you, and I will. Just you wait until you see Hi Bingham, junior, as he really is," he sneered. "He isn't a young god on a pedestal or a hero of romance. He is just a sneak, and I'll show you!"

CHAPTER XII

LTHOUGH little has been said of the thirty-first jams, that were to be the fall novelties from the two factories, they had not been neglected. Matters were progressing very well in both plants. And that same evening, when Henderson and his daughter came home from a silent but disturbing drive back from the Country Club, they found Marvin, who had arrived before them, at the telephone, and as they entered he hung up the receiver and swung around.

"Ericson has just telephoned me that the jars for the new jam have come." He seemed much pleased to know it. "I wish you would go down to the laboratory after dinner with me, Judy, and see them. They are something new for Henderson's, and I should like to hear what you think of them."

It was a perfectly natural request. Judith had often gone down to the factory with her father and cousin, and had watched old Ericson make more than one experiment in fruit combinations.

Her interest in jam had been somewhat diverted since she came home from Europe, and because she realized this and remembered that she had neglected the new fall jam, she smiled at her cousin and said she would be glad to go with him. And she was glad. She wanted to go where she would not think of young Hiram Bingham, and there was no place in the world where she would be less likely to think of him than the Henderson laboratory.

Henderson decided to go with them; he was always ready to go to his jam factory, and the three drove down town in the Henderson limousine.

"This is like the old days," Marvin said. "You haven't been at the laboratory many times since you came home, Judy."

"I've had so many other things to do. It's hard for a girl to be both butterfly and bee. But I am interested: you know that I am interested, daddy." She slipped her hand into her father's palm. "What did you finally decide to use for the new fall jam?"

He sighed and squeezed her hand. "That shows how interested you are," he said dryly. "You don't know anything about it, and here it is almost time to put it on the market."

She turned scarlet and bit her lip. Her father

had a perfect right to rebuke her for her lack of interest, but even justice does not always take the sting from rebuke. And as neither man went on to name the ingredients of Henderson's fall novelty she did not ask. She was too proud. They need not tell her anything unless they pleased. She wouldn't ask.

The factory loomed blackly inhospitable as the car stopped before the steps that led down to the laboratory, which was in the corner basement. As they left the car Marvin told the chauffeur not to wait, but to return in about an hour.

To Judith the laboratory had always been the most attractive and mysterious room in the factory. The utensils and appliances for making experiments and tests had a special interest for her. She had used some similar at college, and in her senior vacation she had worked with old Ericson, who had great patience with her and admiration for her and prophesied that she would become a famous jam maker if she would only put her mind to it. She looked around with a sigh of satisfaction. It was all so spotlessly clean. It seemed impossible that a room in which men worked could be so immaculate, but she had never seen it otherwise. In a glass case that ran the length of the room were samples of all the jams that the Henderson factory had given to the

world, ranged in the different jars and sizes, from the apple butter which had been the first output and which had been made from a recipe of Judith's own grandmother, to the later marmalades and conserves which sounded more elegant, but tasted no better than the old-fashioned toothsome butters. They were all there, behind the glass doors, and Henderson regarded them with proud affection. Few men had done more than he had to sweeten the world.

On the glass-covered table stood a row of short, squat, blue jars which reminded Judith of something. She did not think what it was until Marvin took one in his hands and said:

"Attractive little jar, isn't it?"

Then she remembered. Hiram Bingham had said the same thing to her when he had taken up an old blue jar of jam in Pontarlier.

"Where did you get them?" she asked, and took one in her own fingers. How it brought the past back—the breakfast in the scraggly arbor of the Hotel de la Poste, Madame of the three chins, the eager, helpful waiter, and Hiram Bingham as he questioned Madame about the *Raisinée de France.* How long ago it seemed!

"They are something new that the Star pottery is experimenting with, a reproduction of an old French ware," Marvin was explaining, and

with an effort she called her thoughts back from Pontarlier. "When Sneden, their traveling man, was here in the spring, he showed me a sample, and I ordered some. We've always put our stuff in square bottles, but that is no reason why we should keep on using square bottles. I believe this jar will sell itself, no matter what we put into it. There is something appealing about it."

"It's ducky!" Judith stroked the sleek sides. "Did you get them especially for the new jam?"

"No; but we'll use them for it. I realize the value of keeping to an established custom, but, as I said, there is something appealing about these pots and they seem to suit the fall jam."

Henderson had pulled a chair to the table and was looking at the array of pots with absent eyes. Once before, when he and Bingham were partners, he had used old blue jars—jars that looked as if they had just come from the top shelf of grandmother's cupboard. They were not like these Marvin had bought, and perhaps it was the difference that made him remember the old style which had been used one season by the old Henderson and Bingham Factory. Bingham had wanted them, and, when the potter had failed to get his idea, he had taken the clay and himself made a rough shape. He was a very resourceful man in those days, very resourceful. It was a pity that he

had gone to pieces as he had done. Henderson looked up at his nephew from under brooding lids.

"Have you heard anything of Bingham's fall jam, Marvin?" he asked.

"From all that I have heard they haven't decided on anything yet—still groping for a clue. We'll have our stuff on the market first this season," he exulted. "Old Bingham sent his son around the world for ideas, but he might as well have kept him at home. We've done better staying right here in Waloo," he boasted.

Henderson nodded thoughtfully. For some reason the row of little jars on the table made him think of his old partner in a more kindly way than he had done since he had ceased to have a partner.

"I guess old Bingham would give a good deal to know what our fall novelty will be," Marvin went on in that same triumphant strain. "I caught one of his men sneaking around the boiling room yesterday and I gave him a good piece of my mind before I sent him off."

"Bingham's wouldn't do a thing like that!" Judith was horrified. "Why, that is the same as spying. No honest firm would spy on a competitor."

"Oh, wouldn't it? Much you know of business. Hiram Bingham wouldn't be above snooping

around here himself if he could find anything that would be of advantage to him."

She wanted to defend Hiram Bingham, to declare that he would never play the spy, she knew he wouldn't; but she wisely held her tongue. They would not believe her, and, anyway, the center of the Henderson stronghold was not the place to sing the praises of a Bingham.

There was silence in the big white, shining room, a silence so intense that the sound of steps on the stairs outside came to them very distinctly.

"Hiram Bingham wouldn't be above snooping around here himself if he thought he could learn anything!" Marvin repeated scornfully, and broke off sharply as a shadow appeared on the ground-glass window of the outside door. "Who is there?" he asked, and threw the door open.

The light from the room shone directly on the man outside, and three pairs of eyes recognized him instantly.

It was Hiram Bingham, 2nd. There was no doubt about it. Three pairs of eyes could not be mistaken.

Judith drew a quick breath and turned pale. Her father, on the contrary, turned a fiery red.

"Hiram Bingham!" cried Marvin, and his voice was full of amazement and contempt.

Henderson had risen, and the chair he had occupied was overturned behind him. Judith drew nearer to her father and the little jar she was holding dropped to the floor with a crash. No one noticed the broken pieces. There were more serious things to consider than shattered jam pots.

CHAPTER XIII

VEN to Judith's partial and horrified eyes, young Hiram Bingham appeared confused and embarrassed by the sudden revelation of his presence at the door of the Henderson laboratory. His face had changed from red to white, and he looked at her in a strange, questioning fashion which she did not understand, before he drew himself up proudly and turned to her father.

"Well, sir?" Judith had never heard her father speak quite like that, and the hard, icy tone made her shiver. "What do you want here in my laboratory at this hour?"

Hiram hesitated, a fact which they all noticed and which each read in a different fashion. He threw back his head and looked frankly at the angry Mr. Henderson.

"I can't tell you that, Mr. Henderson." His voice sounded honest, if it was troubled. "I admit that it looks queer to find me outside of your laboratory at this time of night, but I assure you that it is all right. I wasn't trying to rob you

or learn any of your secrets," and he laughed nervously and looked at Judith again.

"Then what were you after?" Henderson demanded sharply.

"I can't tell you that, Mr. Henderson," Hiram said again in a very decided manner which told them that he would suffer anything rather than betray the reason which had brought him to Horatio Henderson's door.

Henderson sniffed, while Marvin sneered and Judith caught her breath and turned away.

"Can't tell me!" Henderson said scathingly. "You mean you won't tell me. And you expect me to believe that it is all right? It looks to me as if you were a liar as well as a spy, Mr. Bingham. I never thought that even Hi Bingham's son would be such a contemptible thing as a spy. We've been in business in Waloo for fifteen years, and this is the first time that I ever found a Bingham man in my factory. You must have had some purpose in coming here. What was it? If you don't tell me I can only think the worst and turn you over to the police."

It was not easy for Hiram to stand still and hear anyone, even the father of the girl he loved, call him names in the presence of the girl herself. Perhaps he had never done anything more difficult than to control his temper while Judith's father

called him a liar, a spy, and a thief. He almost bit his tongue in two when Henderson mentioned the police, but he said nothing. There really was not much that he could say.

"Uncle Horatio," cautioned Marvin in a low voice.

Henderson turned to him fiercely. "Shut up!" he shouted. "Why, the man is nothing but a spy, a thief, if he is Hi Bingham's son. And the place for thieves is in jail. I feel sorry for your father, young man, in spite of the despicable way he has treated me; on my soul, I feel sorry for him. He's a proud man and he won't relish the thought that his son is in jail for trying to break into my laboratory."

And still Hiram said nothing. He only stood there like a proud young figure of injured innocence. After that first glance at Judith he did not look at her again as she shrank back in the shadow and tore her handkerchief to shreds with her nervous fingers.

"First you try to annoy my daughter and then you try to steal my formulas!" stormed Henderson, working himself into a very pretty passion. "I won't stand for it! I told your father to keep you at home, and, if he won't do it, you must abide by the consequences. You shall go to jail! I'll teach you Binghams that the Hendersons have

some rights. Marvin, call up the police station," and he motioned toward the telephone.

"Father!" Judith left the shadow to put a trembling and appealing hand upon her father's arm. "You can't send Mr. Bingham to jail."

"I can't, eh?" He pushed her away. "I'd like to know why I can't? I find him breaking into my laboratory, catch him in the very act. I'd like to know why I can't send him to jail?"

"You can't!" she insisted. "Oh, Marvin, why did you bring us here to-night?" She almost sobbed the question.

Henderson looked at her in speechless wrath. "I'm glad he did. You talk as though Marvin had arranged the whole thing. You make me tired. I suppose you would like me to hand this young man my formulas and wish him a pleasant walk home?" Oh, the sarcasm which was in his voice! "Bah! I'm glad you are here. Perhaps now you will believe that I was right to forbid you to have anything to do with this man. I told you I knew the Binghams, snakes! vipers! both of them—father and son! A spy sneaking around to steal what he hasn't brains to get for himself in an honest way. Bah!"

Hiram clenched his hands and tried to remember but one thing—that the man who was vilifying him and his father was Judith's father—

Judith's father and not Horatio Henderson. That relationship protected Henderson, no matter what he said. But nothing would protect Marvin Cullen if he didn't take the sneer from his face. Hiram would knock him down. Marvin reminded him of nothing but one of the grotesque figures which ornament old Gothic cathedrals. He knew the very one on the tower of Notre Dame, not a gargoyle but a grotesque. You could buy a replica in miniature at a little shop across from the cathedral for a franc, while up on the Rue de Rivoli they asked two francs fifty for the same thing. Hiram kept his thoughts resolutely on the grotesque and tried not to hear what Henderson was saying nor see how Marvin was looking, for a row was to be avoided if possible. He must even allow himself to appear a weak, dishonest fool in Judith's eyes, although she, of all people, should understand, for if Henderson called the police there would be an unpleasant scandal in which Judith would be involved. If Henderson did not have sense enough to protect his daughter he would take care of the girl he loved, even at the risk of appearing a weak, dishonest fool. He managed to control his voice so that it did not express more than a third of the rage which was consuming him.

"You are all wrong, Mr. Henderson. I admit

that appearances are against me, but I never thought of your jams or your formulas when I came here." Henderson snorted contemptuously. "I swear I didn't! I can't tell you what did bring me, but you have got to take my word that it wasn't jam. Bingham's doesn't need to spy. Our fall jam is already arranged for. I can show you the contracts for the fruit. I didn't come here for any ideas for our business, and you have got to believe me when I say it. Of course you can send for the police, but I shouldn't think you would care to involve your daughter in a scandal."

"I can take care of my daughter myself!" snapped Henderson.

"You can't if you drag her into the police court," Hiram contradicted him flatly. "And that is what you'll do if you send for a policeman now. She will be called as a witness."

"Oh, I couldn't bear that!" Judith shuddered and clung to her father. "Let him go, daddy!" she begged.

"You can arrest me to-morrow as well as to-day," Hiram went on, his head very high. "I won't run away. You will find me in the office of the Bingham Jam and Conserve Factory." Every word in the name was uttered as if its office was a very desirable place to be.

It was like a slap in the face to Henderson, but

it was true. He hated to admit that a Bingham could be right, but, now that Hiram dared to remind him, he had to see that he could not expose Judith to a courtroom examination. Not that he had anything to fear. Dear me, no! His record was without a blemish, which is more than could be said of the Binghams. But it would be disagreeable for Judith, and he must think of her. He did not care to have it appear that he yielded to Hiram's sensible request, so he looked at Marvin.

"What do you say, Marvin?"

Marvin had stood leaning against the table, in front of the row of blue pots. He had watched the two men with the satisfaction that a stage manager might feel at a well-managed scene. He came forward now and spoke with a chill contempt which made Hiram tingle.

"Let him go. He didn't get what he came for, whatever that was, and I guess he won't be back in a hurry. Perhaps he is telling the truth about the Bingham fall jam." Marvin laughed lightly, as if, in his opinion, Hiram was a poor liar. "It's a bit raw, the whole story, but let him go. As you say, Judith mustn't be mixed up in a scandal. If he won't annoy us again, why, I'd let him go."

Altogether it was the most humiliating moment in young Hiram Bingham's life. Afterward he

couldn't believe that he had stood there and let Henderson and Marvin talk to him as they had done. To be sure, it was Judith's presence that tied his tongue, but it was also Judith's presence that made the humiliation so keen. He was quite beyond speech as he turned to the door.

Henderson called after him: "See that you don't annoy us again. If you do I shall send for the police."

When the door closed behind him, Marvin looked at his cousin.

"There!" he said sadly, instead of in the triumphant manner you would have imagined he would speak. "You wouldn't believe me when I said that Hi Bingham was a sneak and a liar. I think he has proved that I didn't exaggerate."

Judith had caught her father's arm and clung to it, frightened and bewildered. As Marvin spoke she hid her face on Henderson's shoulder.

"Oh!" she sobbed. "I wish I had never come here. Daddy, take me home."

CHAPTER XIV

HE finals in the tennis tournament were played without either Miss Henderson or young Mr. Bingham. Miss Henderson telephoned to Cyrus Wilkins, who had charge of the arrangements for the tournament, that she was most awfully sorry, but she must have twisted her ankle, for it was impossible for her to play tennis. Scarcely had Mr. Wilkins hung up the receiver when he had to take it down again and learn that Hiram Bingham, 2nd, had strained his wrist. "And a fellow can't play tennis with a wrist that is all to the bad, Cy, so I guess you'll have to count me out of the finals."

"Strained fiddlesticks!" Mr. Wilkins remarked unsympathetically to those who were near enough to hear him. "But I'm not surprised. When Judith and Hiram were paired I felt sure they wouldn't play through to the finish. Their fathers must have gone the limit to put them out now, with the championship in sight. So Judith had to have a twisted ankle and old Hiram a bum wrist. Pshaw, that's too bad!" And he winked

and grinned with a keen appreciation of the situation.

Although she might have twisted her ankle, girls who wear high heels are constantly doing that, it was not the strain which kept Judith housed for the next few days, but something far more painful. A dozen times an hour she found herself vowing that never, no, never, would she speak to young Hiram Bingham again. Her father and Marvin had been right. She had been deceived in him, and if a girl could be deceived by a man who looked as honest and straightforward as Hiram Bingham, 2nd, whom could she trust? Never would she have confidence in a human being again. It was all so sordid and unpleasant that she wanted to die, to run away, at least, to some place where she would never see Hiram Bingham, 2nd. Never willingly would she look upon his face. And it was such an attractive face. His nose—a man never had a better nose. And his eyes—they had seemed to her so frank and true. It was hard to think that she would never look upon so pleasant a face again, and the tears came to her eyes as she remembered certain old sayings about a wolf in sheep's clothing and the goodly apple rotten at the core, and realized how much truth they contained even to this day.

It was a relief when Mrs. Hardwicke called her

up on the telephone and asked her out to the Hardwicke country place for the week end. Judith did not ask who were to be in the party; she did not care. The larger and more varied the better. She was so unhappy that she even let her maid pack her trunk without reminding her that a new blue crêpe was to come home that very afternoon.

She was late in reaching Woodcrest and had time for only a hurried greeting to her hostess before she went to her room.

Dinner was to be at eight. No, there was not a large party; just a few congenial people. "I don't wish to hurry you, my dear, but Henry would rather have you commit murder than be late for dinner. He is so cross when he has to wait."

Miss Henderson had no desire to make Henry cross. She hurried to her room and into a white evening gown with such haste that she was able to arrive in the drawing-room, with very pink cheeks, just as dinner was announced.

Henry caught her by the arm and drew her to the tail of the small procession that moved toward the dining room. It was a decided shock when she took her place to find that young Hiram Bingham was on her left.

Hiram's face brightened when he saw her, but it darkened almost immediately, for Judith gave

him the curtest of greetings and turned back to her host with a smile that was all sunshine and blue sky and green grass and gay flowers in comparison with what had been vouchsafed to him.

Henry Hardwicke had been born with a grievance, and there was no living person who had seen him without one. He loved to talk about it, and, as it was never the same for two days running, his friends were not too much bored unless they had grievances of their own. Miss Henderson had one, as we know, but she did not care to discuss it with even Henry Hardwicke, so she listened sympathetically to him and was glad that he had been made as he was. A man who could carry on a conversation by himself was just the dinner partner for her in her present sad state of mind. That evening Mr. Hardwicke found fault with the silly game laws of North Dakota, which would not allow him to shoot prairie chickens in August, and he was hungering for them in August.

"It's absurd for the law to attempt to regulate a man's appetite," he grumbled. "It might as well say that you can't eat toast any time but at breakfast. And then I'd like to know what squabs and asparagus and mushrooms would do. They couldn't come to the table without a square of

toast to support them, now could they? It's absurd! Absurd! A man wants——"

"'What he wants when he wants it,'" quoted Hiram, deliberately breaking into the conversation. "You are talking a lot of nonsense, as usual, Hardwicke. If you believed half of what you advocate I'd be sorry for you."

"Much you know about it," sniffed Mr. Hardwicke. "A man chained to a jam pot for life. Yah! I'd rather break stone on the road than cheat people into thinking that stewed pumpkin and coal tar dyes make good jam. It's a wonder the pure food laws don't put you behind the bars."

"There is a reason for that," Hiram answered lightly, although his fingers tightened around the stem of his glass. He did not want to discuss jam before Miss Henderson. "It's the undeniable purity of our goods. See advertisement. But to return to the chickens,"—anything was better than jam. "Are you going after them this fall?"

"The very first day the law permits, if the Lord doesn't take me before,"—piously. "Better come with us, Hiram. A bunch of good fellows will be in Adams' car. There will be room for you and you need a change. You're pale and thin," solicitously.

"I need work," Hiram laughed, and as he felt

Miss Henderson's quick glance to see if he was pale and thin, he turned a deep and glowing crimson. "Did you ever go chicken shooting, Miss Henderson?" He simply had to bring her into the conversation. He couldn't stand it to have her sit there beside him with that air of chill aloofness.

"I never shot anything," she told him very distantly.

"Certainly not. I'm ashamed of you, Hiram. Miss Henderson is a very proper young lady. It's scalps, not chickens, she is after. You'll pardon me, Hiram, if I remind you that you have a fairy on the other side of you, and that Miss Henderson's papa would not like to have her talk to you. I say, Judith," Hardwicke went on more seriously, "speaking of your father, how is he? The last time I saw him he seemed to have lost flesh. Anything on his mind?"

Judith colored, but she could not tell him that it was the one hundred and eighty-five pounds of the young man beside her which were on Horatio Henderson's mind. As the conversation took such a personal turn, Hiram had to give his attention to the girl at his left, who was kind enough to overlook his neglect and talk to him of the native wild flowers. He did not care a hang about the native wild flowers, so the dinner was in-

terminable to him, and as soon as it was over he hunted up Judith Henderson.

"Come out on the terrace with me!" It was not so much a request as a command.

The masterful note in his voice made her quiver, but she answered in the same hard, cold voice that she had used to him all the evening, "I am going to play bridge. Mrs. Hardwicke is making up a table."

"You are coming out on the terrace with me," doggedly. "Do you want me to carry you?" He felt savage enough to do it, and she recognized the mood of the cave man and shrugged her shoulders to show that she yielded to force instead of inclination as she went out on the terrace with him. It was very pleasant there, with nothing but velvety lawn, sleepy flowers and moonlight.

Hiram faced her, and she shrank away from the look in his eyes and told herself quickly that he was a spy, a hateful spy, but the breathless repetition of the words did not give her confidence to look into his face again.

"I had to speak to you alone," he began, "to talk about that abominable scene in your father's laboratory the other night."

"I don't think there is anything to say about that," she cried, wondering how he had the effrontery to mention it at all.

"I think there is," hotly. "When I received your note——"

"My note?" She stared at him in amazement.

"Your note," he repeated, a trifle disgusted, to tell the truth, at what seemed to him a poor pretense at surprise. "I didn't want to go to the Henderson laboratory. It seemed, if you'll pardon me, like a fool place for you to ask me to meet you. And if I could have reached you I would have explained that I couldn't go there. I don't see yet why you asked me to. But as you did ask it, and I couldn't get you on the 'phone, there wasn't anything for me to do but follow your directions. I suppose your father and Marvin tagged you, and, of course, I understood that you didn't want to tell your father that you had asked me to meet you there. But at the same time it wasn't quite fair to let him think I was after his old jam recipes. You knew that I wasn't; that I had gone to the laboratory at your request."

"My request!" She had been too stunned and horrified to interrupt him before. "I never heard such an outrageous thing in my life! How dare you say that I asked you to meet me in my father's laboratory? Why—why——!" Her voice failed her and she could only stare at him in speechless wrath.

"I dare say it because it is true." Hiram was undaunted. "I have your note"—he put his hand in his pocket—"no, it's in my other coat—asking me to meet you at nine o'clock in the Henderson laboratory. As I say, I thought it was queer, but you had asked it, and—Oh, Judith! I'd go farther than that to see you if you asked me to, for I love you! love you! I've loved you ever since I saw you in that night express for Paris, and if you care for me a tenth part of as much as I care for you, why—why, our fathers won't amount to a quart of gooseberries. They haven't any right to let their quarrel spoil our happiness. They sha'n't let it come between us if you love me, Judith. Darling!"

He tried to take her hands, but she thrust them behind her. She scarcely knew what to think; her mind was in a whirl. What could he mean by a note from her asking him to meet her in the Henderson laboratory, when she had never written such a note in her life? How dared he put the blame of that horrid scene on her? She didn't care if he did love her, she would not love him. No, she wouldn't! That was all there was to it. And he might compare his father to a quart of gooseberries if he wished to, but she thought too much of her father to even think of loving the son of a man who had defied and tormented him as

Hiram Bingham, senior, had done. She was most unreasonable. She would not believe him, and yet there was a sincerity in his manner and voice that would not let her disbelieve him. The temptation to throw herself into his arms and sob out her troubles on his shoulder made her harder and more unkind, for she would not yield to it.

Poor Hiram was first bewildered and then indignant. He had been positive that she cared for him, but even if she did not she need not act as if he were insulting her when he asked her to marry him. Of course she was devoted to her father; didn't he adore his father? And after they were married the old quarrel would just have to die out. The only thing that mattered now was whether she cared for him at all. Had she forgotten Pontarlier? He didn't think she could, any more than he could. He had been thankful every minute since that Fate had sent him on that train; he was even thankful at the moment when he learned that she was the daughter of Horatio Henderson, for he loved her, loved her! and knew that love can heal breaches that are as wide and deep as the one that separated the Binghams and the Hendersons. He loved her; loved her.

She was outwardly so cold and scornful that he could not know that there was a flame within and that she was all a-quiver with the desire to let

him know that she had not forgotten Pontarlier, that she was grateful to Fate also, and that she loved him. But she would not yield to this desire, hard as it was to refuse to meet his eyes, to keep her hands from his and at last to walk away and leave him alone on the terrace with the velvety grass and the sleepy flowers and the moonlight.

And when she found herself in her room, without any recollection of how she had reached it, she fell on her bed and wept as though her heart would break because she must try to make herself believe that young Hiram Bingham was unworthy of the love which she had given him. It—it wasn't fair for such wicked creatures to have such attractive faces and pleasant manners! It wasn't fair.

And down on the terrace young Hiram looked up at the moon and wondered how girls could be such cold and deceitful creatures. And the moon looked down on him and said she had often asked herself the same question.

Well, he wasn't the first man who had learned the truth, and he probably wouldn't be the last; but whether he was the first or the last he was hurt, and he was not going to stay at the Hardwickes' to be hurt any worse by having to watch Judith Henderson laugh and talk to other men. He hunted up his hostess and told her a polite lie which she did not believe, and which he knew

she did not believe, but which enabled him to leave Woodcrest with his head as high as usual.

So when Judith came down in the morning, fearing and yet hoping in the strange way girls do that she would see Hiram, he was not there. She would have died before she would have asked for him, and therefore it was not until luncheon was over that Mrs. Hardwicke casually remarked that the condition of the jam market was such that young Hiram Bingham could not stay away from it for twenty-four hours.

"I dare say he is afraid he will be investigated by the pure food men," she said a trifle spitefully, for Hiram had made hay out of her arrangements, and no hostess likes to have her plans so used.

"And well he may be afeared," gloomed Mr. Hardwicke. "Stewed pumpkin and coal tar dye, that's what this manufactured jam is. All of it," he repeated emphatically, and then he remembered that the only daughter of Henderson's Jam and Conserve Factory was on his right, and his face changed. "All of it that isn't made at Henderson's. I'll bet your father's stuff is as pure as Bingham's is rotten, Judith."

And for the first time since she had been at Woodcrest Judith laughed naturally. "You know you don't mean a word you say, Mr. Hardwicke," she said unkindly.

CHAPTER XV

YOUNG Hiram Bingham left Woodcrest a blighted being. There was nothing more for him in life. The future stretched before him gray and cheerless, and he had to walk the way alone. He had left his youth there on the Hardwicke terrace, he told himself, and he actually believed it. It was not alone that Judith had refused to listen to him. A girl didn't have to let a man make love to her if she didn't wish him to, and a fellow would be a cad who insisted on making love to a girl like Judith Henderson if she did not wish him to. It hurt him that she didn't. The little adventure they had shared at Pontarlier had meant so much to him that he had been sure that it meant something to her. It stung him that he had not been able to inspire her with some of the passion which possessed him. If he couldn't make the girl he loved care for him, what could he do? He felt incapable and useless, a failure. And what made him tingle from his head to his heels was the fact that Judith had allured—that was the only word

for it—had allured him to the Henderson laboratory and then turned him down. There was no doubt that Horatio Henderson was considerable of a tyrant, and girls were often afraid of their fathers. He could forgive Judith for not telling the truth to her father, perhaps, but he found it hard to forgive her when she repudiated the whole thing as she had done on the Hardwicke terrace. She should have owned up and confessed that she was sorry to have placed him in such a nasty position, for it was a nasty position; but no, she had repudiated the whole thing. That was neither fair nor straight. It wasn't like the Judith whom he loved. He wouldn't have believed it of her if he had not heard her with his own ears.

Oh, well, women were all alike. He was not the first chap who had been used as a plaything by Fate and a girl, and, if the game had been rough enough to hurt him, he would have to bear the pain. Other fellows had told him that girls were like this, and he had laughed scornfully and told them it wasn't true and that some day he would find a real girl and not the pretty, fluffy cat they prophesied. He had thought that he had found her in the Pontarlier *duane*. But he had made a mistake, that was all; and here he was at twenty-six, doomed to a lonely bachelorhood, for he could never care for another girl as he cared for Judith

Henderson, and he was not the type to marry a girl unless he loved her. He was not that sort. No, sir! He would devote the rest of his life to jam, and, if he took sweetness into the homes of others, his own loneliness might become more bearable.

There was no doubt that he was a changed man. His father noticed it, and it gave him a sharp twinge to see Hiram frown instead of grin. The boy no longer whistled or hummed as he read his mail or tramped through the factory. Or, if he did whistle, it was Chopin's Funeral March, which seemed especially suited to his buried love and hopes. He appeared absorbed in business, and old Hiram gave him more of it and neglected what he left for himself to sit and stare at his son with heavy, brooding eyes, and curse the fate which had made his son fall in love with Judith Henderson instead of any one of a dozen girls whose fathers were perfectly indifferent to him.

He had heard that change of scene worked marvels in such cases, and he urged Hiram to go east or west, south or north, and discovered conditions in the jam trade which seemed to require the presence of a Bingham at some faraway center of distribution. But Hiram untangled every snarl without leaving Waloo, and only shook his head at the word travel. "I can't learn the busi-

ness running around the country, and I've been away enough," he said.

Then Bingham bought his son a racing car, and, when Hiram did not ride in it, he begged to be taken out with the hungry eagerness that a youngster would have shown, and the two went tearing over the country roads about Waloo. Bingham even took up golf and tramped the links with Hiram before dinner, and after dinner played billiards with him at the club or at home. Hiram felt years older than his father and was very considerate and tender to him. It was hard on the dad to be disappointed in his only son, and he would make up to him in the ways he could. The two did not talk much, except of jams and conserves. They never mentioned the Hendersons, and they grew closer together every day.

Hiram heard nothing of Judith, nor did he ask after her. He purposely shut himself out of her circle and conscientiously tried to forget her. He knew all of the time that he couldn't do it, but a chap owed it to himself to make the effort.

He dined at the club one evening with his father and a Frenchman who was making a study of American industrial plants, especially jam factories, and had come to Waloo to look at Bingham's. Bingham was flattered that his plant had been chosen instead of Henderson's, and was very

cordial and agreeable. After an exhaustive study of the factory, which really was as up-to-date, as sanitary, and as admirable in every way as a jam factory could be, he had invited Monsieur Lacroix to dine with them. Lacroix was clever and entertaining, and he diverted Hiram more than anyone had been able to do since he had pledged his life to the making of jam. To talk to Lacroix you would think that a man could have no better, no greater, excuse for existence than to spread the bread of the world with sweetness.

They had been talking of fruits, native and imported, and the conversation naturally drifted to tariffs and duties. Hiram had actually laughed when he told them of an experience he had had in Pontarlier with a package of milk chocolate.

Lacroix nodded as if he were not surprised. "Chocolate is contraband in France. Yes, we make it ourselves, you see. And the officers at Pontarlier are zealous, very zealous."

"Pontarlier? Where is that?" Bingham asked idly.

His voice carried to a neighboring table where a man was dining alone, and when he heard Bingham he moved his chair a trifle nearer the other table, as if their talk interested him.

"Pontarlier," repeated Lacroix, for Hiram nodded to him to explain. Hiram had taken out

his notebook and was looking up some figures on duties which had been disputed. A loose leaf fluttered out unnoticed and dropped at the feet of the solitary diner. The man saw it and stooped to pick it up. As he glimpsed the writing that covered the page he swallowed an exclamation and his eyes gleamed unpleasantly. Instead of handing the paper to Hiram, he folded it and slipped it quickly into his own pocket. Hiram went on turning pages while Lacroix explained to Bingham that Pontarlier was a French town, just this side of the Swiss frontier. Travelers coming into France from Italy or Switzerland have their baggage inspected there. "And, as your son said, milk chocolate is often confiscated."

Their neighbor had finished his dinner and rose now. His lips were parted in a smile of pleased satisfaction as if he had enjoyed an excellent meal. He had to pass the Binghams' table, and as he did so Hiram glanced up, to meet Marvin Cullen's eyes. He caught a glint in them, a look almost of triumph.

"Good evening, Hiram," Marvin said distantly.

"Good evening," Hiram answered with cold carelessness.

"Who was that, Hiram?" asked his father, who could see only the man's back and did not recognize it.

"Marvin Cullen," was the curt response.

"H'm," was all Bingham said, after a glance at the retreating figure.

"Snake!" his son muttered, but the sight of Marvin had unloosed a chain of thought which possibly explained some of the things which had worried him. He had forgotten that Marvin had told him that Judith was to marry him. If she was engaged to Marvin naturally she would not listen to another fellow. She was not the kind who would flirt with other men if she was a fiancée. The explanation brought some consolation and brightened Hiram's gray and gloomy horizon.

CHAPTER XVI

UDITH was quite as unhappy as young Hiram and even more bewildered. The interview on the Hardwicke terrace had proved to her that she cared far more for Hiram than she had thought. And far more than the dutiful daughter of Horatio Henderson should care. She had cried herself to sleep that night, but tears did not change her determination. She would not yield to this feeling for a man who was dishonorable enough to spy around the laboratory of his competitor. Hiram's excuse made her furious. It mortified her that she had any sensation except contempt for a man who would do what he had done and say what he had said, and in her effort to forget Hiram she nearly drove her father mad.

He was used to doing as he pleased. Judith had been at college for four years, and then she had gone abroad for almost another year, so that until now he had had no one to consider but himself. There was no one except the cook to grumble

if he was late for dinner or if he failed to come home to dinner at all. It was a new experience, after the years of independence, to have a woman waiting on him and waiting for him. Before he could form a wish for anything she had that very thing at his elbow. She never left him alone out of business hours, and people, seeing them always together, said: "How devoted Judith Henderson is to her father!"

This devotion was all very well when matters moved smoothly, but there are days, as everyone knows, when matters do not move smoothly, and then a man wishes to be left alone to grumble or swear as he pleases. Henderson could not swear with Judith at his side, and he could not grumble when she gave up her own pleasures and neglected her friends to be with him. He did not ask for so much of her time and attention, and, fond as he was of her, he did not wish so much of her time and attention. He wanted to be left alone when he desired solitude, and he wanted her to be at hand when he desired company, which was not very much to ask; any man will agree with him in that. But Judith did not use common sense. Sometimes it seemed to him that he had scarcely said good-by to her after breakfast before she appeared at the office to take him out to luncheon. And no sooner was he settled at his desk after

luncheon than she would run in to see if he couldn't spare the time for a motor ride before dinner.

"It will freshen you up. You work too hard," she would say, and run her hand over his head or down his sleeve, a caress which was very annoying to a man if he was at all nervous, and just now, for some reason, Henderson was as nervous as a cat. He seemed to have a premonition of something, he didn't know of what.

So Judith followed him around at home; she followed him to the office; she motored him down and she motored him home; and after dinner she played to him or took another lesson in cribbage, so that she might qualify for a game which Henderson had not played since he and Bingham had enjoyed a nightly rubber together.

As they motored over the country roads they sometimes met Hiram Bingham and his father in the new racing car, and the chilliest of greetings passed between the old men, while the young people paled or flushed, and barely glanced at each other.

Judith ran into the office earlier than usual one afternoon, and she waited while Henderson finished some belated dictation. It had been a disagreeably warm day, and the stenographer was almost as nervous as her employer. Judith slipped away to the window. She was nervous also, and most

unhappy, for she had made the discovery that she was not forgetting Hiram Bingham, 2nd, in spite of the devoted attention she was giving her father. She felt very forlorn and useless as she stood in the window and looked down on the street. Across the way she caught a glimpse of Marvin hurrying to the factory. He had a parcel under his arm, and seemed excited and nervous, too. He crossed the street at a run, and she lost sight of him as he turned into the factory.

The stenographer went out as he came in. He thrust the small parcel he carried in Henderson's face.

"Look at this, Uncle Horatio!" he sputtered. "It's Bingham's new jam. Just look at it!"

Henderson was putting away his papers, preparatory to closing his desk for the day, but dropped them at once. Henderson's fall specialty had been given to the trade that very day, and he had hoped to precede his rival. It was disappointing that he hadn't been able to do that, but he was curious to see what his largest competitor had to offer. He jumped up as Marvin tore the paper from the parcel and exposed a small blue jar, which he put on the desk.

"But that's our jam!" Henderson cried, after a keen glance.

"It's Bingham's jam," Marvin grimly insisted.

"'Bingham's King's Jam.' See!" His finger pointed to the label, where Henderson's bulging eyes read the words.

"'Bingham's King's Jam,'" he repeated them slowly, and rubbed his eyes.

"'Bingham's King's Jam,'" Marvin said again, and his words were almost a snarl. "It's mighty queer," he went on rapidly. "Such a thing never happened before. You and Bingham have been rivals for fifteen years, but this is the first time that you ever put out a jam made even of the same fruit. There has been a leak somewhere." He turned away and became aware of his cousin's presence. He looked at her quickly and said, as if the thought had just flashed into his mind: "Perhaps you can explain the mystery?"

She drew back and the color left her face. Her father put down the jam pot and stared at his nephew.

"What do you mean by that, Marvin?" he asked, and his voice made Marvin angry and sent his hand to his pocket. Henderson seemed to feel such confidence in Judith and such a lack of confidence in him.

But he must not let his anger carry him too far, farther than it was wise to go at present; and he tried to keep all expression other than frank interest from his face as he answered his

uncle. "Judith has been such a friend of Hiram Bingham's that I didn't know but she might have let something slip to him. You remember that night we caught him trying to get into the laboratory? He must have come a second time, or some one gave him the information he wanted. Oh, I don't mean that Judith would do it intentionally." He was evidently horrified that either of them should think for a moment he would imagine such a thing. "But you know how unprincipled men are, and a fellow like Bingham could screw information out of a girl."

The color rushed into Judith's pale face in an angry flood. For a moment she could not speak, and when she found her voice it would not serve her as she wished it to, and the force of her words was broken by breathless gasps of anger.

"How dare you say such a thing, Marvin Cullen!" she cried. "The idea of saying that I would betray father's secrets! You know I wouldn't, don't you, father?" And she put her hand on Henderson's arm and made him look at her.

As their eyes met she found it hard to bear his keen, searching glance, for it seemed to read the name of Hiram Bingham, 2nd, all over her heart, and she was ashamed to have it there. Henderson

was remembering many things as he looked into his daughter's eyes. There was the old Medici cook book she had insisted on sending to young Bingham; she had taken it from his very hand without any reason, and after he had told her it was full of material which would be of inestimable value to a jam manufacturer. She had refused to obey him when he had asked her to have nothing to do with young Bingham. She had interceded for Bingham the night they had caught him spying around the laboratory. The very devotion which had annoyed him might have been so that she could serve Bingham better. Henderson's eyebrows drew together and his jaws shut with a snap as he reviewed this series of black facts against Judith. Marvin might be right, and yet he could not believe that Judith, his Judy, would go so far as to betray his secrets to his rival. He took her face between his hands and looked at her intently while he asked:

"You are sure you did not tell young Bingham anything?"

She gave a little cry of pain and pushed his hands away. "Father!" she cried in a choked voice which made a dull purple color creep into his face. Never had he hurt her so or made her so indignant. How dared he ask her such a question?

But crying "father" even in a choked voice will not prove anyone's innocence.

"How could I tell him," Judith went on, fighting hard against her tears, "when I didn't know what the jam was to be made of—when I don't know now what it is? I'm ashamed that this is true, ashamed that I haven't been interested enough in your work to know; but you never told me, never spoke of it; and I—I've had so many things to think of. King's Jam,"—she took up a Bingham jar and looked at it. She was too miserable to connect it with anything she had seen before. "What is it?"

With a gesture of impatience, Henderson raised his arms and walked to the other end of the room. It didn't seem possible that any member of the Henderson family could be ignorant of the ingredients of the Henderson fall specialty. Marvin pulled open a drawer and took out another jar and placed it on the desk. It was as like the first as it could be and not be the first. The only difference was the collar around its neck. It was gray with the name in red, while the collar of Bingham's jam was gray with blue lettering.

"Why—why——" Judith couldn't believe her eyes. "It is queer, isn't it?" she went on lamely. "But perhaps the likeness is only in the name and in the jar," she suggested hopefully.

Marvin laughed unpleasantly, although his uncle's face brightened. Perhaps the similarity was only in the outward appearance. Marvin found a spoon and opened both jars. Henderson put in his knife, and groaned as he tasted Bingham's jam. Judith took a dainty morsel first of Henderson's and then of Bingham's, and her eyes grew round and big and a delicate color flooded her face, very different from the angry wave of a few minutes before.

"Why!" she looked up to meet her father's anxious eyes, "it's the *Raisinée de France!*"

"I thought you didn't know what it was," Marvin began triumphantly, but Henderson silenced him.

"What is that, Judith? What is *Raisinée de France?*"

As soon as the name had passed her lips she would have given much to have it back again; but there is little one can do for the spoken word. After all, it did not matter; she had meant to tell her father of *Raisinée de France.* She would tell him now. But as she looked up and met his eyes she shivered, for she knew he would not believe her. He had worked himself into a state of mind in which he would believe nothing that she said. And Marvin! She would not tell him, whether he would believe her or not.

"What is it, Judith? What is *Raisinée de France?*" Henderson asked again and in the same menacing voice.

"It is an old French jam that I had in Europe," she answered sullenly. "Where did you get the recipe?" Where could he have obtained it?

"Where did Bingham get it?" The question was Marvin's, but Henderson nodded approval.

"Yes, where did Bingham get it?" It was her father who wanted to know now.

She would have given worlds to have rushed away and had a good cry, but, as she could not do that, she lifted her head proudly and said: "In Europe, doubtless. Mr. Bingham has been in France."

"A likely story!" sneered Marvin. "But, even if he got it in France," and he showed his teeth in a manner that told Judith he was sure that was not where Bingham's had obtained the formula, "that doesn't explain how he came to make it this fall and put it out in pots that match our pots."

She stamped her foot. "Marvin Cullen!—you make me so furious. How dare you insinuate that I gave Mr. Bingham this recipe when I"—she had almost said "never heard of it," which wouldn't be true, and so she changed her words—"didn't know that you were going to use it." The change

broke the strength of her sentence, and both Marvin and Henderson knew that she had not said what she meant to say.

Henderson drew a deep sigh and turned away, while Marvin moved the two jars back and forth, back and forth, on the desk. Judith was in a mood to do anything as she faced them.

"I can see how Mr. Bingham got the recipe." Oh, she could, could she? Marvin sniffed. "But I can't see how you got it. You were never at"—she caught the word "Pontarlier" from her lips just in time—"in the town where this is made."

"A fellow doesn't have to go to France to get jam formulas." Marvin was watching her closely, although he appeared so absorbed in his jam pots. There was no doubt that Judith knew more than she would tell. That was as plain as the nose on a man's face. He turned to his uncle. "What do you think, Uncle Horry?"

Henderson had made a resolution while he was at the other end of the room, and he meant to keep to it if they would let him. "I think that you had both better control your tempers," he spoke sharply. "As for the formula for Henderson's, I gave it to Ericson."

"You gave it to Mr. Ericson!" Judith was surprised. "But—where did you get it?"

"I got it," shortly. "Anyone could get it. It

is easy enough to understand that, but what evidently can't be explained is how Henderson's and Bingham's put out the same jam at the same time, as Marvin says." He almost forget his resolution as he thought of it.

Judith drew herself up proudly. She was cut to the heart by his lack of confidence. "If you are going to believe Marvin instead of me——" she began, and would have said more, much more, but her voice died away to a thread, and, dropping into a chair, she hid her face on her father's desk and wept until the papers which were lying there were all damp and mussed.

CHAPTER XVII

T the very moment that Judith Henderson was weeping on her father's papers and making them all messy because he did not have more trust in her, Hiram Bingham, senior, and Hiram Bingham, junior, were staring with open mouths and eyes at two blue jars which stood on Bingham's desk. There was amazement and consternation in their faces, and the jars looked just as much alike in Bingham's office as two similar ones had looked in Henderson's.

After frowning at them for sixty seconds, Bingham removed the covers and tasted the contents of first one and then the other. He frowned blacker than before as he put down the second jar, and looked up at his son from under the dark line which anger had drawn across his forehead.

"Well!" he said crisply. "What do you make of this?"

Young Hiram did not know what to make of it. He had his hands in his pockets, and he frowned, also, but his frown was more puzzled than angry.

"Such a thing has never happened in the fifteen years that Henderson and Bingham have made jam in separate factories. Each of us has put up two new varieties a year, but never before have we made jam out of the same fruit even. And such a specialty as this—King's Jam," he read the label in which he had taken such pride twenty-four hours before. "It will make us the laughing stock of the trade," he groaned; "in Calcutta, in Sydney, in Capetown, in London, in——"

"You've sure sent a laugh around the world," Hiram interrupted, and ventured a grin himself.

His father saw no humor in the thought of a chortling world, and muttered something. "I don't understand it." He twisted his lower lip as he sat glaring at the two jars, which appeared as innocent as two blue jars full of so delicious a jam could look. "There is but one thing to think," he went on, half to himself.

"And that is?" queried Hiram.

"That there has been a leak. Somewhere between here and the laboratory the formula of this jam," and he tapped the Bingham jar, "leaked out; and Horatio Henderson, damn him! was low enough to take it and duplicate our thirty-first specialty."

"I can't believe that," Hiram spoke promptly, for he had a very clear idea of how Horatio Hen-

derson might have obtained the recipe. He had been a fool not to foresee just such a situation as had arisen. "We can trust our men. They have been faithful to you in the past; why should they go back on you now?"

"Yes, why should they?" Bingham repeated the question slowly. He could trust his men. They had been faithful in the past. There was only one new man in the factory this year who had access to the formula, and that was his son, Hiram Bingham, 2nd. Bingham looked at Hiram as if he had never really seen him before. He pushed the jars from him impatiently. "You have put a very disagreeable thought in my head, Hiram," he said suddenly.

Hiram's eyes met his with a quick question. "What do you mean?" But before his father answered he knew what he meant, and the angry color rushed into his face. "You don't think—you can' think that I——" He simply couldn't go on; surprise and indignation choked him.

His father put a soothing hand on his arm. "Not intentionally, my boy; not intentionally. I know you too well for that. But I know women. As soon as you told me you thought you were in love with that Henderson girl I foresaw trouble. And it's come."

"You think I told Judith Henderson?" Hiram

wouldn't have believed that his father's brain could have held such a thought of him.

"Not intentionally," Bingham repeated sadly. "But she's pretty and has a way with her," he admitted it grudgingly. "And I suppose she wormed it out of you. You aren't the first man who has been made a fool of by a woman. Look at——" He hesitated. Where should he tell his son to look? He remembered a familiar example, and went on more firmly: "Look at Samson. Strong as he was, Delilah got him. You probably never realized that you were telling her what you had no business to tell her. But think back," he implored. "Didn't you ever talk of jam?"

"Heavens, father! We had other things than jam to talk of. You can believe me or not, but I have never hinted to Judith Henderson, or any other Henderson, that we were going to put out this stuff for our fall specialty."

"You mean you think you didn't tell her." Bingham's voice was stubborn, and Hiram moved away impatiently. "A man doesn't always know how much he is telling a girl. And, if Henderson didn't get the formula from you, where did he get it? Tell me that."

"Where we got it, I suppose," his son muttered.

Bingham raised his hands to Heaven, as if to ask the gods if they had ever seen a man more

unreasonable than his son, but he spoke very calmly when you consider how angry and hurt and disappointed he was. "That's ridiculous, Hiram, perfectly ridiculous. And you know it. You told me yourself that you bought the formula from a woman in Pontarlier, and Horatio Henderson was never in Pontarlier in his life. Pontarlier! Lacroix said no one went there except to buy absinthe by the wholesale. And you needn't try to make me think that Horatio Henderson drinks absinthe and buys it by the wholesale, for, vile as he is, I won't believe that of him."

It was Hiram's turn to raise his hands to Heaven, and he did it as fervently as his father had done. "I never said that Mr. Henderson drank absinthe!" he said in astonishment. "How do I know what he drinks? I never saw him take so much as a glass of water."

"Then how did he get this formula?" demanded Bingham warmly. "You said—I remember distinctly—that the woman who sold it to you said that it had been a secret in her family for centuries and that it had never been given to anyone but you. Perhaps you lied to me."

"I didn't lie to you!" hotly. "That is exactly what she said."

"Then if you are the only one she ever gave it to, how did old Horatio Henderson get hold of

it?" He was back from where he had started and had made a triumphal journey around the circle. "You might as well tell me, Hiram. I'm sorry that a woman made a fool of you, but you're not the only man; you have lots of company," and he laughed unpleasantly.

"But—— Good Lord! Father." Hiram's very hair seemed to bristle with indignation. "You've got to believe me when I say that Judith Henderson and I did not talk of jam." You would have thought jam was the very dirt beneath your feet to hear the inflection he gave the word.

"I knew there would be trouble," Bingham persisted drearily. "You hadn't any business to fall in love with her. You might have known better, that I wouldn't like it. I don't have to blame myself, for I warned you. I know the Hendersons," scornfully. "There isn't much that you can tell me of the Hendersons."

The last thing on earth Hiram desired was a quarrel with his father, but there were limits to what a man could stand. He was too sore and unhappy to bear such a browbeating, and he was using the last remnant of self-control when he muttered thickly: "You may think you know old Henderson, but you don't know Judith Henderson."

It was Bingham who lost his temper then. He

had been holding tight to it with both hands, but now he let go. "If you're going to take sides against your own father, you'd better go over to the Henderson factory and ask for a job!" he shouted.

"I'm not taking sides, but I believe in fair play."

"And you call it fair play to have a girl cajole a business secret from a man and then use it against him!" sneered Bingham. "I have another name for that sort of thing. I tell you once for all, Hiram, that I'm tired of this shillyshallying of yours. You needn't think you can trail around with the Hendersons and with me at the same time. You can make your choice. Give up Judith Henderson and we'll forget what's happened." He gulped, as he looked at the little pots of jam, so alike with the exception of their collars. "Or——" he hesitated. It wasn't so easy to say it.

Hiram's face turned gray. "You mean——" Neither could he put it in words.

Old Hiram choked, but he did not flinch; the boy must be brought to time. "Exactly. I don't want any divided allegiance. I've got to be able to trust the men who work with me, and I can't trust a fellow who dangles around a Henderson."

CHAPTER XVIII

O there they were—Judith Henderson suspected by her father of betraying the formula of his jam to his rival, and young Hiram Bingham accused by his father of telling the ingredients of the Bingham jam to the daughter of his hated competitor. It was a most unpleasant situation, and Judith and Hiram hotly resented it. After the first shock the two fathers accepted what they regarded as the inevitable result of an evil influence with a pathetic resignation which only added fuel to the anger of the young people.

At first Judith had intended to tell her father everything she knew concerning the King's Jam, but when he refused to believe her when she declared that she had not so much as hinted to young Bingham that it was to be the Henderson fall novelty, she changed her mind. If twenty-two years of love and loyalty did not count for anything, if her father could suspect her when he knew her as he did, why he could keep on suspecting her. She would say nothing to defend herself.

There was quite an obstinate strain in Judith, inherited from her father.

With Hiram silence was a matter of chivalry. The adventure at Pontarlier was Judith's adventure, and, if she did not choose to tell of it, his lips were sealed. An absurd complication had grown out of a simple situation, and she was the only one who could explain it. If she did not speak, he could not. But his father should trust him; there was nothing in his past that should make his father suspicious of the present. Other men might be influenced and cajoled by a girl, but he, and he thanked Heaven that it was so, was not of that type. Oh, he was positive of that, for he had not yet reached an age to understand that temptation is all a matter of environment and circumstance.

When Mrs. Smyth, the same Mrs. Smyth, who was presented with a French cousin—Count Pontarlier—by Horatio Henderson, gave a dinner dance at the Country Club the night after the unpleasant discovery that the fall output of the Bingham and Henderson factories was similar in package and contents, Judith went, because if she remained at home her father would have regarded her with sad and piteous eyes, and she did not like to be looked upon as if she had committed a crime and was allowed to go unpunished

just because she was Horatio Henderson's daughter. Hiram was there for much the same reason. He had evaded giving a direct answer when Bingham asked him to make a choice between Bingham's and Henderson's, and had patched up a temporary harmony. But his father would look at him mournfully, as he would look at a man who had been made a fool of, and sigh until the very foundations of the house seemed threatened.

Knowing the feeling between the two families, Mrs. Smyth considerately separated Judith and Hiram by the length and breadth of the table. It was only by dodging the pink dahlias in the center that Hiram was able to see that Judith was paler than usual, that there were dark shadows under her eyes, and that her smile was forced. She wore a gown of white satin and had a string of small pearls about her neck, and altogether seemed like a dear little girl who had been grievously hurt and misunderstood.

Judith dodged the flowers in her turn and observed that Hiram looked as if he had passed through a disagreeable and painful experience. There was a grim line to his mouth, his eyes were heavy, and there was a frown between them, even when he bent to speak to the pink-tulled débutante who had fallen to his lot.

Marvin was on the same side of the table as

Hiram and almost across from his cousin, whom he watched so closely that his dinner partner noticed it and resented his lack of interest in her chatter.

"I don't wonder you can't keep your eyes off Judy," she said at last. "She is positively lovely. A bit pale, perhaps, but that may be her gown. White turns me into a ghost. I hear that Judith and young Hiram Bingham are the greatest of pals." And she laughed as if there was much humor in the thought of such a friendship.

"Pals!" She had successfully attracted Marvin's attention. "Judith wouldn't look at Hi Bingham."

"She is looking at him now," Miss Post calmly told him.

It was true. Judith was looking at young Bingham, and Marvin glowered at her and made such a savage attack on his ice, which was in the form of a pretty pink rose, that he narrowly escaped sending it across the table. He would keep a watchful eye on Judith, he decided; he sensed rebellion.

The evening was half over when Hiram went up to Judith in the ballroom and asked her for a dance. Not eight hours before she had vowed that nothing would induce her ever to speak to Hiram Bingham, 2nd, again, but she could not

cut him there before everyone—not when he had that hurt, grieved look in his eyes. So she let him slip his arm around her waist and draw her in among the dancers.

As they passed an open door the soft night air of September greeted them refreshingly, and, without so much as a "by your leave," Hiram swung her out of the ballroom to the wide veranda.

After the music and light and chatter inside, the veranda seemed like heaven. A big white moon coquetted shamelessly with another moon which dimpled and smiled in the depths of the river which ran at the foot of the bluff on which the clubhouse was perched. Hiram led Judith to a corner where a jutting window shut out everything except moon and river and made them to all intents and purposes alone in the world.

Neither spoke for a few moments, but looked off over the moon-flooded land and water. Then Hiram turned and gazed at her. She seemed more youthful, more appealing than ever out in this silvery light, and his heart jumped into his mouth when he saw that her lips were trembling.

"Judith," he said impulsively, "why are you going to marry Marvin Cullen? You don't love him."

Her eyes grew big and black with astonishment.

"Marry Marvin? Marvin Cullen? What makes you think that?"

He forgot the promise he had made to Marvin and told her.

"Marvin said I was engaged to him?" she repeated, her eyes bigger and blacker. "You must have misunderstood him," she went on coldly. "He couldn't have told you such a thing, for it wouldn't be true. I have no intention of marrying Marvin Cullen—or any other man." And she turned her back to him and stared at the moon.

Hiram swallowed the word that rose to his lips. Yes, Marvin had lied to him. Perhaps Marvin had done more than lie? A quick suspicion made him ask:

"You remember that other night at your laboratory?" She moved away with an impatient fling of her head. Could she ever forget it? "You are sure you didn't write and ask me to meet you at the factory?"

"I did not!" She was indignant at the question.

"Then who did?" He put his hand in his pocket and took out the little note which he had received the evening of the semi-finals of the tennis tournament.

She took it from him and held it under the light that came through the window. One glimpse was enough to tell her who the writer was, and

her eyes flashed, although her heart began to beat a more joyous measure.

"I don't wonder you thought it was from me. Marvin's writing has been taken for mine before."

"Marvin!" As he thought how he had treasured the note Marvin Cullen had written, Hiram registered another charge against him. They were mounting up very fast, those charges, and very high. Some day there would be an accounting, but just at present he would forget them, for he had glimpsed the softening of Judith's eyes as she had let him see them for a moment. It was enough to make the eyes of any girl soften to learn that the man she had tried her best to think of as a spy and a sneak was not a spy nor a sneak, but as honorable and honest as she had wanted him to be. She drew back into the shadowed corner as if she wanted to hide even from the moon the gladness in her face.

Hiram followed her and put his hand on hers as it trembled on the back of a chair.

"Judith," he began, and his voice was very soft and wooing, "you don't hate me because I am Hiram Bingham's son?"

"Oh, no! I don't hate you." She tried to speak as if she could not hate anyone—didn't her prayerbook bid her to love her neighbor? But

it was difficult when his fingers were holding hers as though he would never let them go, and her fingers were trembling because they were afraid that he would let them go. The effort was a sad failure, for Hiram came closer.

"That's something," he cried, feeling happier and more light-hearted than he had done for weeks. "But it isn't enough." His arm slipped around her. "Dear heart, sweetheart, you love me? Can't you forget that our fathers are hot-headed old fellows and remember that we are young and that we love each other?" He dropped his cheek on the soft fluff of her black hair, as she stood encircled by his eager arms, and his voice was wondrously low and gentle.

It thrilled her and sent a wave of exhilaration and joy through every vein. Her heart beat so wildly that she would have been ashamed if his heart had not been thumping as madly, there beneath her cheek. She forgot her father, as he had asked her to; she forgot his father; she forgot all the doubts and fears that had obsessed her; she forgot all about jams and conserves as she stood there in his arms. She seemed to belong there; and Hiram knew that she belonged there also, for he raised her face and looked deep into her shy eyes before he kissed them, and then he kissed her lips—many times. No doubt she was

horribly undutiful and disloyal, but she did love him. She did. She could not help it; he was so altogether lovable. And she kissed him with warm lips which trembled under his.

"And you'll marry me," he went on in the same soft, wooing voice, which made her like water in his hands, "at once? There isn't anything to be gained by waiting. Neither your father nor mine will give his consent in a thousand years. But each will forgive us as soon as he knows that is the only thing he can do. Why, we are all they have! So marry me at once, honey, and you'll have the satisfaction of knowing that, besides making a Heaven out of this old world for me, you will have reconciled two old fellows who are dying to be reconciled, only they don't know how to manage it without losing what they think is their dignity. You'll marry me, sweetheart?"

But the thought of an immediate marriage with the son of her father's enemy sent her from his arms in a panic. "Oh, I couldn't!" Her tone was tragic. "Father never would forgive me."

"Yes, he would." Hiram was confident. "Just as my father will forgive me. They can't afford to lose us. We are all they have, you know, darling."

She shook her head dubiously, and he saw that there were tears in her long black lashes. "I'm

afraid," she whispered, and he took her in his arms again and kissed her.

And there they stood in the shadow of the jutting window, when an automobile came dashing up the driveway, breaking every speed law in the state, and stopped before the club. Horatio Henderson stepped out of it and stood for a moment on the steps, his dominant figure shutting out the moon.

CHAPTER XIX

ORATIO HENDERSON was spending a very pleasant evening in his library. He had for company that incomparable old gossip, Horace Walpole, a rare edition of whose letters Henderson had picked up that afternoon. He was chuckling over Walpole's catty insinuation that Sarah Siddons' arms were not genteel, when Bunston came to tell him that he was wanted at the telephone. He muttered something as he rose, for he was well satisfied with his companion; he wouldn't have changed old Walpole for anyone he knew, and he kept his finger in the book to mark his place as he roared:

"Hello!"

"Is that you, Uncle Horry?" It was Marvin's voice, and it sounded excited and angry. "I thought you should know that Hiram Bingham is here and that Judith is carrying on with him shamefully. I tried to tell her what you would say, but she won't listen to me. She is dancing with him now."

"Dancing with Hiram Bingham!" Horace Wal-

pole dropped with a thud to the floor, where he lay unheeded, his nice old calfskin overcoat crushed under him until the housemaid picked him up the next morning. "After what has happened! I told her she wasn't to have anything to do with Hiram Bingham." Henderson's words were like a series of explosions.

"I reminded her of that, but she doesn't care. She'll probably dance all the evening with him, to show that she doesn't share your feeling for the Binghams. I've done my best, but she won't pay any attention to me."

"She won't?" snapped Henderson, thinking fast, as he stared into the receiver.

"No, she won't," whined Marvin.

"Well, we'll see what attention she'll pay to me!" He called for Bunston and ordered him to tell the chauffeur to bring the car around at once—*at once.*

"I'm not going to let Judith make a fool of herself," he muttered as he champed up and down the hall like an angry bear at the Zoo. "If she were a kid playing with matches, I'd snatch them from her no matter how loud she screamed. This Bingham is worse than a whole gross of matches. She shan't have anything to do with him. She shan't!" He slammed the door behind him and climbed into the car before it stopped.

The ride to the clubhouse was like an escape from prison with a posse after him, for Henderson kept prodding his chauffeur and ordering him to go faster or he would break his neck. Whether he obeyed or not, the man felt the result would be the same. However, there would be more glory in dying as a martyr to speed than there would be as the victim of a man's temper, and Carl did the best he could. When they drew up at the club both men were breathless, and Henderson had to stop for a moment on the steps before he could go in.

Judith saw him and slipped from Hiram's arms. He could feel her muscles stiffen as she did so, as if she were bracing herself for an unpleasant interview.

"It's father," she whispered.

"Let me speak to him," he begged.

But she refused, and made him promise to leave her alone and not to say anything to her father that night. She recognized danger signals even at a distance. If her father had carried a red lantern she would have known his state of mind no better. Hiram left her most unwillingly, and she went across the veranda to meet Henderson.

He grunted when he saw her and caught her arm.

"Come home with me," he ordered harshly.

She looked about in a vague, helpless way before she let him put her in the car, where she sat as far away from him as she could. He gave a curt command to the chauffeur.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" blustered Henderson, as the car shot down the road.

"No, I'm not." His daughter was recovering her self-control and gathering courage for the coming conflict of wills. "But I should think you would be ashamed to treat me like a baby."

"You haven't shown as much sense as a baby would," he retorted. "You can't be trusted. I told you that I didn't want you to have anything to do with Hi Bingham's son, and yet you keep meeting him in a sneaky, underhand way that I won't stand for. You shan't marry him, and you might as well understand that, although you didn't hesitate to tell him my business secrets. I tell you, Judith, I'm about at the end of my patience. This Bingham's father——"

"I don't see why you blame him for what his father is," she interrupted tearfully. She did not wish to quarrel with him.

"He is his father's son, I reckon, and, anyway, I don't like the Bingham breed. This Hiram"—you would have thought he was a rattlesnake to hear old Henderson speak of him—"may be as muscular as a football guard, as beautiful as a

matinee hero, and wear his clothes like the leading man in a ready-to-wear advertisement, but those aren't the qualities I want in a son-in-law. You might as well make up your mind to that. I will never consent—*never!*"

"I will never marry anyone else!" She was white and firm-lipped now.

"Never is a long day and has surprises for all of us," he told her inconsistently. "I tell you, Judith, I know more about men than you do, and if you will let me pick out a husband for you," he coaxed, "I'll get you a good one—a man who will make his mark in the world."

"I don't care anything about your man." She was furious because he spoke of her husband as he might have mentioned a peck of apples or a string tie. "I suppose you mean Marvin? Well, I'll never marry him! He isn't even honest or truthful. And I will marry Hiram Bingham!" Her determination was only strengthened by what he had said. "You haven't any right to refuse your consent just because you and his father had a silly quarrel fifteen years ago."

"Well, upon my word!" Henderson's face was as black as the blackest thunder cloud. "So you defy me, do you?" he sputtered. "I tell you that I know what is best for you, and I'm not going to let a little fool sentiment spoil your life. I've

been easy with you, too easy, and you've only grown more headstrong. But you'll promise me now to give up this Bingham and forget him, or I'll put you where you won't get a chance to see him again." He had forgotten the chauffeur, or else he did not care if he was overheard, for his words were an angry roar.

When Judith spoke her voice was shrill with passion also.

"I will never give him up and I will marry him. You have made me decide to do that. I wasn't sure before, but now"—she swallowed a lump in her throat and hurried on—"you can lock me up, but I'll find a way to escape." She had reached the end of her patience, and all of the strain of the past weeks, which had worn her nerves to ribbons, left her blind and deaf to everything but indignant anger at his injustice.

"You will, will you? Well, if you can go to him you can. But just remember, young lady, that you are dealing with Horatio Henderson, a man who has managed to get the better of most men."

"You didn't get the better of Mr. Bingham!" she reminded him tartly, and was ashamed of herself.

A hot retort sprang to his lips, but he choked it back. He made no further attempt to influ-

ence his daughter, but sat back in his corner and chewed viciously at his cigar.

Judith regarded him furtively, fearfully, and tearfully. She was bitterly ashamed of what she had said, but the hot, angry words had leaped from her lips as if they had been alive. She would have smothered if she had not voiced them. What a fool she had been to dare her father! That was not the way to win him to a reconciliation with the Binghams. Perhaps, if she had coaxed, she might have won some concession, but she had not coaxed, and now—— Well, no matter what he did or where he took her, she would never marry any man except Hiram Bingham. Never! She wondered what her father intended to do. He probably had some plan, and her imagination suggested several things that were not unlikely. It was really rather a surprise when the car stopped before the Henderson door. Henderson followed her into the hall, but she went up the stairs without a word. She could not trust herself to speak.

Her father watched her. He wished, with a dull ache at his heart, that they could go back to the old days when she could be coaxed with a doll or diverted with a circus. He had never felt so helpless in his life as he did when he stood there and watched Judith go up the stairs. And he had never felt so angry.

CHAPTER XX

UDITH did not come down to breakfast, and Henderson had only Marvin's company, which was more of an annoyance than a comfort, for Marvin was curious to hear what had happened and what was going to happen. Henderson did not care to tell him the former, and he wasn't sure himself of the latter. So he only grunted irritably in answer to Marvin's questions. He felt baffled. He hadn't been able to sleep, for fear of what Judith might do next. He had to protect her against the Binghams, he told himself, as he tossed restlessly on his bed, and the only way to do that was to take her away where she would not even hear the hated name. He wished now that he had followed out his first plan and carried her to California and Japan. But he had been so sure of his influence over her that he had not taken her twenty miles from Waloo, and now the milk was spilled; and very thoroughly spilled.

It was not until luncheon that Judith appeared, a very wan and big-eyed Judith. Just to look at

her told you that she had not slept any more than her father had; but Henderson did not care. She should be robbed of sleep—a disobedient, defiant daughter. He called her into the library.

"Have you thought of what I said last night?" he asked as pleasantly as he could. He was determined to keep calm and collected.

"I haven't been able to think of much else." Her voice trembled, but her eyes never wavered.

"And you are going to be reasonable? To give up this man?" eagerly. "Why, Judy, you haven't known him a year, and me—why, I've been with you all your life. You wouldn't put a stranger before your own father?"

But evidently Judith would, for she told him proudly that young Hiram Bingham was not a stranger to her, that he was the man she loved, and that——

"There. That will do!" he raised his hand peremptorily. "You're just repeating yourself. That's the kind of drivel you talked last night. I don't know what to think of you, Judith"; and he really didn't. "But I can't let you ruin your life. I can't let you marry this Bingham. No," as she started to speak, "you needn't say anything. We won't argue any more. Come to lunch." For Bunston was in the doorway, announcing the meal.

It was a silent and uncomfortable luncheon, for the conversation was all in Bunston's hands as he served them. When they left the table, Judith would have returned to her room, but her father stopped her.

"Will you ride down town with me, Judy?" he asked.

She hesitated. His voice was softer, more beseeching than commanding, and—how tired he looked. If this were an olive branch, she was only too eager to accept it. Yes, she would ride with him, but—she glanced at the pretty house gown she wore.

"Will you wait until I change?"

"Put a coat over it," he suggested. "I'm in a hurry."

She put on a motor coat that covered her from neck to heels, and tied the ribbons of her motor bonnet under her chin. Henderson was rather silent as they sped down town. He did not look at her, but she ventured to put her hand over his gnarled fingers as they rested on his knee. This invitation to ride with him looked as if he wished to be friends again, and, if he did, she was only too ready to do her share.

They did not go to the factory, but Judith thought nothing of that. Henderson frequently had business which he attended to before he went

to his office. But she was puzzled when they turned toward the river and ran out on the wharf to the *Loafer*, the Henderson houseboat, which had been described and pictured in the Sunday newspapers as the most luxurious craft on the Mississippi river.

Before Judith could quite realize that it was the *Loafer*, with the puffing little *Worker*, the steamer which furnished the motive power, beside her, the car had glided swiftly and smoothly from the wharf to the deck; and, with a ringing of bells and a shrill whistle, the engine of the *Worker* began to throb more violently and the houseboat was pushed from the shore.

"You'll find your things in your cabin." Henderson opened the car door, while his daughter sat like a statue, her eyes on the stretch of water which separated her from the shore. "And I want you to understand one thing: It isn't any more inconvenient or unpleasant for you to be carried off in this way than it is for me to carry you. It will cost me thousands of dollars to be away from the factory just now, but you don't care for that. Neither will I if it keeps you from making a mistake. You are too blamed selfish to see anything but your own side. You needn't try to bribe the servants, for you'll only waste your money. I have told them that I will double anything you

offer. There isn't anyone on the *Loafer* except you and me and Marvin."

"Marvin!" she cried in astonishment.

"Yes, Marvin,"—testily. "You didn't suppose I was going to sentence myself to life imprisonment with you and the men on the *Worker*, did you? Marvin understands the situation thoroughly and he approves of what I'm doing. Now go to your cabin; and I hope before night you will come to your senses and we can go back to Waloo."

She stood on the deck, a strangely defiant figure in the big motor coat. She had pushed her bonnet back and the river wind played tricks with her uncovered hair. Her face was pale, but her eyes were blacker than usual. The upper part of her face was all woman, soft and alluring, but her chin was cast in a somewhat masculine line that was suggestive of her father's chin, and should have warned him. It was firmly set now, and so were her lips, as she met his sharp eyes before she turned with unconscious appeal to the chauffeur, who was examining the internal mechanism of the car. Henderson stepped between them.

"I told you, Carl," he said, "that I will double any sum that Miss Henderson offers you. Don't forget that, and don't let the other men forget it. You are to have no communication with anyone

except Marvin and me," he told his daughter firmly, "until you promise to behave yourself."

She felt that she was a little girl again, with a braid hanging down her back. She couldn't be a woman, twenty-two years old, and have anyone speak to her as her father was speaking. She was bewildered, but she looked at him steadily.

"I hope you are prepared for a long trip," was all she said as she walked over to the rail and stared down into the river.

Henderson followed her to say, somewhat scornfully: "Of course, you can yell like a Comanche Indian, and if anyone comes to your rescue I shall explain that you are my daughter, suffering from mental trouble; that you are out of your mind and I'm giving you special treatment, which won't be so far from the truth, either. Or you can jump overboard and put us to the trouble of pulling you out. Or you can act like a sensible girl and say that you are sorry you have been so selfish and inconsiderate, and that you will do as I want you to in the future. If you aren't ready to admit that now, you will be soon, for it is perfectly useless for a chit like you to buck against a man like me. I didn't think it of you, Judith. I never imagined my daughter would sell me out—and to the Binghams!" He waited, but she did not raise her eyes from the

water which ran along beside the boat, and at last he went away, saying he would hunt up Marvin.

Judith looked very forlorn as she stood there and felt the rush of the boat under her. What could she do against her father's iron will and resourceful brain? He had snatched her almost from her lover's arms, and how was she to see Hiram again? She saw herself a prisoner, wandering up and down the Mississippi river for the remainder of her life, and the picture was so sad that she put her head down on the rail and wept miserably.

CHAPTER XXI

ATE sent Hiram Bingham, 2nd, across Main Street just as the Henderson car was passing, and he caught a glimpse of Judith and her father. Something in the way they sat there, Judith staring straight ahead of her and Henderson glaring out of the opposite window, made him stop and stare, too. Then he jumped into a taxicab which had just drawn up to the curb.

"Follow that black limousine!" he ordered curtly.

He didn't know why he gave the order, but there was something about Judith as she looked straight ahead of her and about Henderson as he stared out of the window that made Hiram uncomfortable. What was old Henderson up to? He was capable of anything. Lucky he had seen them. He would feel several kinds of a fool if the Henderson car was on its way to the Henderson factory, but he would at least have satisfied his curiosity and quieted his fears. The Henderson

car, however, did not lead him to the Henderson factory, but down to the river; and Hiram opened his eyes wide when he saw the *Loafer* and the *Worker*, and realized that the latter had steam up. Was the old brute carrying Judith away against her wishes? He knew he was. And what could he do? He did not dare to make any movement which would attract attention, so he ordered the chauffeur to drive slowly along the wharf, and whistled softly to a newsboy loafing on the corner.

"Find out where the *Loafer* is going, son!" He held up a coin.

The boy grinned and ran to the edge of the wharf. The *Worker* had cast off her lines and was puffing into midstream. "Where are you goin'?" he called shrilly.

The engineer looked at him and laughed. "To Europe. Want to go along?"

The youngster shook his head and raced back to the taxicab, which had stopped behind a warehouse.

"It's goin' t' Europe!" he panted to the man whose head was thrust out of the open door.

"Is it? That's quite a trip, isn't it?" He tossed him the coin and then, from the protecting corner of the warehouse, watched the boats. Would they go up the river or down? Fortu-

nately they couldn't go anywhere else. Henderson had to choose one of two directions. He could not see Judith, sobbing by the rail, but he knew she was there, and he shook his fist at her father. Henderson must imagine he was back in the Middle Ages. He could carry his daughter off to-day, but he couldn't keep her—not from Hiram Bingham, 2nd. He would find his way to her and carry her away from Horatio Henderson.

There! The boats were going downstream. Good! He couldn't know, of course, how far down they would go, but he could learn. It wouldn't be easy for Henderson to hide the most luxurious craft on the Mississippi in the upper river. She was too well known.

Before he left the factory that afternoon he wired to several of the towns below Waloo.

"Has Horatio Henderson's houseboat, the *Loafer*, passed your town?"

As promptly as possible he received replies. He wanted to dance and sing when he read the answer from Mifflin: "Henderson's boat anchored a mile below town."

It would be an easy matter for him to go down to Mifflin on the Chicago "flyer," row out to the houseboat and carry Judith off from under her father's very nose. He had not a doubt of his

ability to do this, and went about his preparations very cheerfully. It was only a question of a few hours before he and Judith would be coming back over the same road, he thought, as the "flyer" carried him to Mifflin, and then they would be married, and then—Horatio Henderson could blow himself up with rage if he wished to. He couldn't unmarry Judith. She was of age. So was he. There was absolutely nothing to stand between them and a marriage license except two irascible old men.

It was after ten o'clock when he rowed quietly out from the shore. The houseboat was anchored just out of midchannel. She showed as many lights as a Christmas tree and looked very gay and festive in the moonlight.

Judith was alone on the lower deck, staring over the river. Her father had gone to bed with the pleasant consciousness of having done a good deed and spiked Mr. Bingham's guns. Marvin was in his cabin. Judith felt very small and helpless as she stood there alone. For the first time she began to appreciate the enormous strength of Horatio Henderson's will, and it made her feel an atom.

Some one called softly from the shadow which the boat cast blackly on the water, and, when the call was repeated, she ran forward to stare in

open-eyed amazement and wonder at young Hiram Bingham.

"You!" she thought he must be a ghost, for no ghost was ever more breathless than Hiram as he climbed up beside her.

"Thank Heaven you are alone!" he said hurriedly. "I want you to come away with me now! We can be married at once, and then your father can storm and threaten as much as he pleases, but he shan't torment you and he shan't shut you up on any houseboat."

She pushed him from her and the color left her face. "You want me to run away with you? Now? To-night?" Her voice shook.

He bent to kiss her. "Dearest, it is the only way. You can't argue with a man like your father, and you can't stay here. He will never consent; but after it is over he will say, 'Bless you, my children!' See if he doesn't. He hasn't been fair to you."

"No, he hasn't been fair to me," she admitted slowly; and she stood gravely considering his plan while he waited patiently. Her father hadn't been fair. That was true. But she hated to run away and marry in this hole-in-the-corner sort of way and in defiance of his wishes. All her filial instincts revolted at such a step. And yet there was no reason in his dislike and disapproval of

Hiram, nothing but a silly prejudice born of his enmity to Hiram's father. He could not help but love Hiram when he learned how lovable he was. It had been easy for her, and everyone said she was very fastidious. Her father did not understand how much she cared for Hiram. She would die if she were separated from him forever. She had suffered already in the brief time since the boat had left Waloo, and she shivered as she thought of what might lie before her if she refused to go with her lover. Her father was a hard man when he was thwarted. He was quite capable of keeping her in confinement until she promised to obey him and give up Hiram. And she would never do that, she told herself with a sob.

Hiram felt her yield, and his arms tightened around her and he kissed her cheek. "You will come!" It was not a question, but a statement; and she accepted it with a quivering sigh.

"Yes," she murmured, and remained quietly in his arms for a moment longer before she drew away. "I must go and change. There are things in my cabin, and I can't elope in a blue charmeuse house gown." She smiled faintly as she glanced down at the morning frock she still wore.

He wanted to tell her that she could elope in

green calico if she happened to be wearing it, but he let her go.

"Be quick and quiet," he cautioned; and she nodded understandingly.

He went to see that his boat was ready, and received a distinct shock when he discovered that the swift current had unfastened the loose knot he had made in his excitement and had carried the craft downstream. He called himself many harsh names, but that did not bring back the rowboat nor provide a substitute means of transporting his ladye faire to the mainland. A nice hero, he was, and he groaned. Here he had asked a girl to elope with him, and how was he to get her away from the *Loafer?* He cautiously investigated the lower deck of the houseboat, and could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw that a canoe actually hung on a rack beside the door into the main cabin. He was sure Horatio Henderson did not know it was there. He made his way to it, stealthily as an Indian on the war path, and when he had lowered it into the river and made sure that it was really fast he grinned broadly. Fortune was evidently on his side—the old lady hadn't let even his asinine stupidity interfere with his plans, and he was grateful.

CHAPTER XXII

UDITH'S cabin was a luxurious nest, all ivory and rose-blossoming chintz. As she closed the door behind her she could not but remember how happy she and her father had been the day he had first brought her there. The tears came to her eyes as she took a photograph of Henderson from her dresser and looked at his bald head and keen eyes.

"You are a dear old daddy, but you must learn that my life is my own and that I must marry the man I love," she murmured, and kissed the grim face before she put down the photograph.

She found, as she had expected, a street suit and hat in her closet, and, slipping out of the house gown, she was soon arrayed for her wedding. Henderson heard her movements, light as they were, and smiled drowsily.

"Dear little girl! She'll see that I'm right and thank me one of these days," he murmured between snores, while Judith wrote a note and left it, in a very proper fashion, on her pin cushion.

She stood in the doorway, gazing about her for

the last time, and with a little sob dropped on her knees beside the brass bed. Then she rose to her feet and shut the door behind her.

Hiram was waiting impatiently in the shadow beside the canoe. He took Judith's hand to help her into the little craft. She hesitated.

"You'll be good to me, dear?" she said wistfully. "I feel so alone, so——"

"Not afraid?" he begged. "Not when you love me and I love you. Good to you? I hope to God I will be good to you!" There was a sincerity as well as passion in his face which made her feel very solemn and shy. It carried her back, for some unaccountable reason, to the days when she was a very small girl, the days when she and her father had been everything to each other, always together, and she began to cry. "What is it, Judith?" He was alarmed and put his arms about her. "Never mind, sweetheart. It will be all right. I know it's tough for you to go off this way, but your father will forgive you. I promise you he will. Come!"

But suddenly she pushed him away and looked up with appealing eyes. "I can't, dear! I thought I could, but I can't. And I love you so. I love you so." She breathed the words rather than spoke them, and her arms crept up until they were around his neck, her head against his

breast. "But I can't go away with you like this. I'm all father has. Wait!" as he would have spoken. "Let us wait a little while. When father knows how I really feel—that I can't live without you,"—and the arms about his neck tightened—"he will consent. He must! He must!"

Hiram gave her a little shake. "Buck up, honey," he whispered. "Come now. It's only a little way to the shore. We will find a minister there."

"But father! I'd give up anyone else in the wide world,"—and he knew that she was telling him the truth—"but I can't go away from him like this. And how could you feel that I would stay with you when I ran away from my own father? No, I can't go."

"You know what it means?" She was still in his arms, but he made no effort to hold her. It was she who clung to him. He was bitterly disappointed and a trifle angry. Everything had been arranged so well; it was so simple to slip away now and be married, and then send word to their fathers. If they did not take advantage of this opportunity only Heaven knew when they would have another. "Your father will try and keep you from ever seeing me again."

"He can't do that,"—confidently. "You don't

understand." She spoke wistfully, and put one small hand on each cheek and turned his face to hers. "Listen, dear. Father and I quarreled last night. We never before said such things to each other. I can't go away and leave him with the memory of those angry words. If it wasn't for that—for the angry words and voices!"—she shivered,—"I'd go, and thank you for taking me; but you see it's dreadful to run away in anger from those you love. But I'll see you again. And I'll marry you. Yes, soon! I promise. But I can't run away from father to-night, even if he hasn't been fair to me."

He was touched, if he was disappointed, and he tried to gather comfort from the old saying that dutiful daughters make dutiful wives. "Little saint," he murmured, "if you are as faithful to me as you are to your father——" He did not finish his sentence, except for a long, passionate kiss.

He could not shake her resolution; she was determined to make another appeal to her father; and he could not remain. There was nothing for him to do but drop into the canoe bobbing along invitingly by the side of the *Loafer* and paddle away.

Judith remained where he had left her, staring after him and feeling that she might as well drop

into the black water; there was nothing left for her if she could not see Hiram and if she quarreled with her father.

Marvin came out of the saloon with a yawn. He saw her and walked across the deck. His quick ear caught the sound of the paddle.

"What is that?" he asked, peering through the shadows.

She ignored his question and stepped between him and the canoe. "Marvin," she said slowly, "you told Hiram Bingham that I was engaged to you."

He darted a quick glance at her. What else had young Hiram Bingham told her? He would have given a good deal to know, and also to learn when she had received the information. But he laughed softly. "That I hoped to be engaged to you," he corrected in a lazy drawl. "I couldn't tell a lie and say you were engaged to me when you weren't, could I, Judith?"

"Yes, I think you could," she answered steadily.

He flushed. "You know I've wanted to marry you ever since we were old enough to be married," he went on. "Can't you, Judith? It would please Uncle Horatio, and we get along so well together. You know how much you have meant to me always. I can't remember the time when I didn't love you and want you."

She barely heard him. His words sounded forced and unnatural beside Hiram's quick, passionate sentences with their ring of honesty.

"You don't mean a word of that, Marvin!" She tried to speak quietly. "And, even if you did, I wouldn't marry you. I don't trust you, and I've got to trust the man I love. You've lied about me; you've used my name in a way you had no right to do. Oh, yes, I know about the letter you sent to Mr. Bingham. Do you remember that night at the factory when father asked if I thought you had arranged it all? That was just what you had done, although you were the only one who knew it. You tried to make us think that Hiram Bingham was a sneak, a spy. Why, you haven't as much honor in your whole body as he has in his little finger! He wouldn't stoop to do the things you do. He's honest and true. You know—father said you had talked it over"—her lip curled scornfully—"that there is only one man in the wide world whom I will marry, and his name"—she drew herself up proudly and colored as she told him—"is Hiram Bingham!"

Her words sent him into a fury. "You shan't marry Hi Bingham!" he cried. "You shan't. You belong to me, and he shan't take you from me. I'll make you marry me."

"You will?" She faced him with a will equal to his own. "How?"

"With this!" and he took a slip of paper from his pocket. He was glad he had not used it before. He had been tempted to, but some instinct had said, "Wait," and he had waited. He was glad of it now, as he showed it to her. It was the leaf from a notebook which he had picked up from the floor of the club the night the Binghams had dined there with Monsieur Lacroix. He spread it out so that she could see what it was, and there was a triumphant sneer on his face.

She gazed at the paper curiously. At first she could not see what it was, and then she recognized it with a quick start and a sudden flush. It was the leaf from Hiram Bingham's notebook on which she had written the recipe for the King's Jam.

"Where did you get that?" she demanded, putting her hand behind her to keep it from snatching the paper from him.

"I reckon that is pretty good evidence that you betrayed your father's formula to the Binghams." He tried to keep his voice cool and contemptuous, but it would be triumphant. "In your own handwriting! Never mind how I got it. I have it, and I rather think that you won't wish your father to see it. You don't really care for Hi Bingham, Judy. You can't! You're too fine to care for a

man like him. He has you fascinated, hypnotized. And the quarrel between your father and his father makes you think it's romantic to be in love with him; but you don't care for him, for a man who tries to hide himself under another name. Pontarlier!" and he laughed harshly.

She had turned away from him when he had threatened to show the paper to her father, but now she swung back and looked at him: "What do you know about Pontarlier?" she demanded quickly, and then could have bitten her tongue at the betrayal of the fact that there was something to know.

CHAPTER XXIII

IRAM felt decidedly injured and ill-treated as he paddled away from the houseboat. He had put himself to considerable trouble and inconvenience to invite Judith Henderson to elope with him. He had felt a very knight of romance, a Galahad, a Bayard, as the Chicago "flyer" carried him from Waloo, but now, as he paddled upstream against the current, he was not sure but he had been more of a fool than a hero. Well, his dream of happiness was over. He had small faith in Judith's influence over her father; possibly he measured it by his power over his father; he laughed bitterly, for he knew how weak it was in comparison with his father's hatred for any one of the name of Henderson. But if Judith Henderson cared more for her father than she did for him, why, it was right, perfectly all right, for her to stay with him. He had thought she loved him. But a man couldn't understand a girl; he just couldn't do it. His father was right, and from now on his life would hold nothing

but the old man and the jam factory. Women were out of it forever.

His thoughts were so black and so gloomy and so absorbing that he did not see a steamboat which hurried past him, in a mad haste to reach its port at the earliest possible moment, but he did feel the swash of her waves under him. They threw him off his balance, and before he could regain it the canoe turned turtle and he was struggling in the moonlit waters of the Mississippi. He called loudly, but the steamer went on as though a man in the river was much too trivial a circumstance to interrupt what was expected to be a record-breaking trip downstream.

Hiram managed to catch the canoe and cling to it while the current carried him toward New Orleans. Ahead of him were the red and green lights of the *Loafer*, and he thought of Judith. Would she feel sorry when she heard that he had drowned under her very window? He knew she would, even though she had sent him away. It was very sad, very romantic, to die thus for love of a lady, but, hang it all! it was deuced unpleasant, as a ripple of unfiltered Mississippi river water found its way into his mouth. He spat it out and shouted again, and yet again.

There was no answer from the houseboat. He had not expected that there would be. Everyone

there, except Judith, would be glad to have him drown. But he had a right to expect a response from the fussy little steamer which had upset him. He wasn't sure that he could swim ashore, with the current carrying him to New Orleans, but he would have to try if no one came to rescue him.

It was the engineer on the *Worker* who at last heard a cry that made him open his sleepy eyes wide enough to look out on the river. He could glimpse a dark object which did not look like a floating log and was too animated to be an overturned boat. He watched it for a second and then lowered a boat and rowed across to see what it was. Hiram pulled himself into the boat, shivering, exhausted, and mad.

"How did you get here?" The engineer eyed him suspiciously. "That's Mr. Henderson's canoe or I'm a goat! How did you get it?"

"Never mind how I got it." Hiram's teeth were chattering. "Put me ashore. I'll make it well worth your while."

But the engineer was an honest man and a suspicious one. He did not understand why a man should be clinging to Henderson's canoe in the middle of the night in the middle of the Mississippi river, and he refused to be bought.

"I'll put you on the *Worker* until Mr. Henderson has a chance to look you over and say it's all

right," was all he would promise, and, willy-nilly, Hiram was taken to the *Worker*.

He made the best of the situation, and while his clothes were drying by the engine he rested in the engineer's bunk. Not fifty feet away from him Judith Henderson was crying herself to sleep in her luxurious nest on the *Loafer*. It would have comforted Hiram if he had known that.

He could not sleep. Too many thoughts were crowding their way through his brain, and at last he rose and cautiously subtracted his clothes from the neighborhood of the engine. They were not dry, but he dared pneumonia and put them on. He would have dared whooping cough rather than remain where he was, to be handed over to Horatio Henderson later. He slipped out on deck.

On either side the river bank stretched away in rather a ghostly fashion in the light of the early dawn. In front of him was the houseboat, as silent as the future, and beside him the river ran its crooked course to the Gulf. The boat the engineer had used to rescue him danced along beside the *Worker*, without a care or a sorrow in the world. Hiram eyed it speculatively. It was such a joyous little boat and it promised help. He regarded the broad back of the man nodding sleepily beside his wheel and wondered if he could.

He wouldn't stay there to be hauled over the coals, perhaps to jail, by old Horatio Henderson. There was a chance, and a fellow who didn't take a chance deserved to be jailed. He drew up the rope, held his breath as the water gurgled an appreciation of the joke, and cautiously lowered himself into the boat.

A milk train took him into the city, and he reached home just as his father, who rose early, came downstairs.

Bingham, senior, fresh and immaculate from bed and bath, looked at his son in a disgust too deep for words. If Hiram was going to add dissipation to his infatuation for the daughter of Horatio Henderson it would be more than he could stand—more than he would stand.

"Well!" he said sternly, staring at the crumpled clothes and generally disheveled appearance of his son.

Hiram must have been absolutely devoid of shame, for he only mumbled: "Good morning, father," and, edging past without the sign of an excuse or an explanation, went up to his room. There was nothing for Bingham to do but go on down and be thankful for at least one thing, that none of the servants was yet about.

"I don't blame the old boy," Hiram muttered, as he looked at his reflection in the mirror. "I

look like a disreputable old rounder. Well, it's for the last time!"

He left much of his ache and all of his weariness in the hot bath, and felt more like himself when he was in clean linen and fresh clothes. There is no doubt about it, a bath and fresh clothes do contribute a lot to the comfort and good feeling of the world. So it was quite another Hiram who went downstairs.

Bingham glanced up from his paper and gave a sigh of relief. He scarcely knew what he had feared or expected.

"Ready for breakfast?" was all he said, and rang the bell.

Conversation was rather desultory until the man had left them alone; then Bingham leaned forward, his elbows on the table, and looked at his son.

"I won't stand for your making a dissipated ass of yourself, Hiram," he said severely.

"You won't have to." Hiram flushed a bit, but he spoke quietly. "I'm not that kind. I can't tell you why I was out all last night,"—Bingham sighed; there was so much that Hiram couldn't tell him—"but I'll say this much; that it's you and the factory for me in the future. I'm through with everything else." There was a bitter ring in

his voice that took the severity from his father as water takes the starch from cloth.

"My dear boy!" He wanted to express his sympathy, but he scarcely knew how. "Have a bit more trout?" he begged, all his heart in his voice.

Hiram shook his head and thrust away his plate. "Never mind. If you please, I'd rather not talk of it." And he pushed back his chair.

His father rose, too, and as they went from the room he put his hand under his son's arm and asked, oh, very gently: "Shall we go down together?"

Hiram threw him a wintry smile. "Sure! We'll always go together."

He did not hear anything of Judith for a week, and honestly tried to think of jam instead of her. It wasn't easy to do, for he had the King's Jam to look after, and you can imagine how inextricably Judith was mixed with the King's Jam. He did the best he could, however, and even managed to nod coldly to Marvin Cullen, instead of cutting his throat as he yearned to do, when they met at the club.

It was the next day that he saw Mrs. Hardwicke, and she stopped him as he would have passed with a hurried greeting.

"Can you tell me where Judith Henderson is,

Hiram?" she asked, as if it were the most natural question in the world for him to be asked.

He reddened. "Where Miss Henderson is?" He repeated the question to gain time to recover himself. "Isn't she at home?"

Mrs. Hardwicke gave her head a decided shake which made all of the sweet peas on her big black hat quiver. "Hasn't been for a week; not since the Smyths' dinner dance. I asked Marvin—how I hate that man!—and he said her father had sent her away for her health. Health! When she is as strong as a young pony. But when I wanted to know where he had sent her, Marvin evaded and contradicted himself until I knew that something had happened. Have you any idea what it is?"

"Not the ghost of a one," Hiram managed to answer.

She looked as if she did not believe him. "Horatio Henderson is an old-fashioned pig. He is quite capable of shutting Judith up somewhere if she disobeyed him and dared to fall in love—with you,"—daringly. "I'm disappointed and I'm afraid that Waloo is to be cheated of its romance. Whenever I saw you together I felt that I was in Verona. Why don't you strangle Cousin Tybalt?"

Hiram managed a laugh, albeit a very hollow

one.. "You have a great imagination, Mrs. Hardwicke. And you think I would make a pretty Romeo?" He smirked bravely.

"And Judith a darling Juliet. Don't let them spoil it, Hiram. Her father hasn't any business to lock her up. Dear me! why can't your two fathers forgive and forget and let the course of true love run smooth?"

"I wonder? But there is my father now. If you will excuse me, Mrs. Hardwicke, I will ask him."

His face was darkened with a heavy frown as he joined Bingham in the car waiting at the curb. So that was what people were saying in Waloo. He didn't care for himself, but he was sorry for Judith. It couldn't be pleasant for a girl to be talked about in that way.

Bingham had watched his son as he talked to Mrs. Hardwicke, and he had thought, with a contraction of his stiff old heart, that Hiram was thin and pale. He sighed as he imagined that the boy might be worrying over Judith Henderson. Why, oh why! if Henderson had to have an only child, couldn't it have been a boy?

"I say, Hiram," he said, as Hiram took the seat beside him, "why don't you get away for a few days? Everything is going on well, and there is no reason why the jam business can't spare you

for a week or two. Run up to Cloud Lake, if you won't go anywhere else. You haven't been there for years. You'll probably be able to get a few early ducks and there may be some fishing. It will do you good to get back to Nature and put you in condition to tackle our spring jam. Take the notes for that book you were going to write for me, 'The Jams of the World,' and get to work on it. If you'll go, I'll run up and spend Sunday with you."

CHAPTER XXIV

MARVIN CULLEN had an excellent reason for not telling Mrs. Hardwicke where his cousin Judith was. He did not know. He had not seen her since he had threatened her on the deck of the *Loafer*. When she had left him that night he had stared blackly at the river before he lighted a cigarette. He only puffed at it a few times before he threw it away with a short but very expressive word, and went to his cabin. He slept so soundly that it was late when he awoke, to find that at some time during the night the *Loafer* had exercised her feminine prerogative and, instead of going down the river, was being pushed back to Waloo as fast as the energetic *Worker* could push her. The chimneys and skyscrapers of Waloo were already in sight when Marvin went on deck, and as soon as the boat was brought to the dock he was dispatched to the factory by his uncle, whose manner and face were not conducive to conversation of any sort.

Henderson had not told him that he had already

talked to Judith. She had found her self-control and was no longer excited and angry, but sad and determined. In plain but firm language she explained the situation to Henderson as she saw it. She loved Hiram Bingham; nothing her father could say would do away with that fact; nor with the other, that she was going to marry Hiram Bingham some day. He could threaten to disinherit her, but she did not care a dried raspberry about the jam factory. He could leave that to anyone he pleased. But she would like to keep his affection. Consequently she would not do anything for a month—she had meant to say six months, but she couldn't when she remembered Hiram. During that time Henderson was to do his very best to learn to love Hiram Bingham, 2nd, and to become reconciled to the idea that some day he would have him for a son-in-law. If he couldn't do that in a month—well, she would be sorry to have anything come between them—but she did not see how he could help but love young Hiram Bingham if he honestly tried.

Henderson gave a contemptuous snort; he saw himself trying to learn to love young Hiram Bingham, the son of old Hiram Bingham! It couldn't be done. It just couldn't be done, and that was all there was to it. And then he remembered

something that made him dare to shake his head at his daughter's decision.

"You don't mean that, Judy. Why, the fellow's a dirty sneak! A spy! You can't have forgotten how we caught him——"

"That wasn't his fault," she interrupted, and took the wind from his sails and left him hopelessly becalmed by telling him that it was Marvin who was to be censured for what had happened that night and not young Bingham. "And I won't be humiliated as I was the other night," Judith went on in that same quiet, calm voice that chilled her father and made him wonder if it could be his warm-hearted Judy who was talking to him. "It is bad for you and bad for me to have such scenes. Y-you hurt me so and made me so angry that, when Hiram asked me to run away from the *Loafer* with him last night, I almost went."

"Run away from the *Loafer!*" gasped Henderson. "Hiram Bingham wasn't on this boat last night." He thought all of the excitement and anger had weakened her mind, and he wondered, with horror, if she were going to imagine that she saw young Bingham everywhere.

"Yes, he was," returned his daughter in a manner that convinced him that she was not mad. Her lips actually parted in a smile as she ex-

plained. "He came to Mifflin on the Chicago 'flyer' and rowed out to the *Loafer*. He wanted me to run away with him and be married at once; and I was so hurt and angry that I almost consented. I even went to my cabin and changed my gown and wrote you a note. See!" She showed him the little missive which had spent the night pinned to her cushion. "And then I remembered how much we had been to each other; that there were only two of us, and that we had come as near quarreling as we had ever done in our lives. I couldn't run away from you when you were angry with me—after the horrid things we said to each other. But you haven't any right to let your silly prejudices come between us. I have been a good daughter and we love each other, and you have just got to be fair. I told Hiram that I would wait and talk to you again, and then——" She did not say what would happen then, but Henderson knew.

"Bless my soul!" he muttered, and wondered why he, of all men, should have this trouble come to him. He looked at her helplessly as she went on to tell him that she would give him another chance to learn what a perfectly splendid man young Hiram Bingham was. As for herself, she thought it would be better for her to go away for a while.

Henderson's face brightened and he interrupted her eagerly. "Sure! We'll go anywhere—New York, Paris, Cairo——"

"I must go alone," she said quietly, and it hurt her to see the radiance leave his face. "I'm not going away to forget Hiram. I couldn't do that even in Cairo or Paris or New York. I don't wish to forget him. But I'm going so that we won't be tempted to say unkind things to each other. You will get used to the thought of my marriage, and realize that I am serious about what I say quicker if I am not here for you to argue with."

And that afternoon Henderson took her to the train, and, after it had pulled out, he left the station with feet that were as heavy as lead, and his head dropped forward like that of an old man. He felt old, about a thousand years old, he thought, for he began to understand that Judith was a Henderson, and the Hendersons had been famous for many generations for the amount of stubbornness they could show.

His house was very empty and dreary when he returned to it. There was no one there except the servants, and the only reason they were there was that he paid them very good wages every week. If he quarreled with Judith, and refused to love young Hiram Bingham, that was all he

would have about him for the rest of his life—hired service. It did not look attractive, and he walked restlessly up and down the long library and visualized just how unattractive it would be.

He took up the evening paper with an impatient exclamation, but he did not read it as he slouched down in the chair which had always been so comfortable; now it seemed to be stuffed with pins and needles instead of the best curled hair. He was thinking of how empty his life would be at the end of a month if Judith carried out her resolution and married Hiram Bingham. There would be nothing for him except the jam factory, and though business gives a man an occupation, a fellow likes to think that its excuse is the soft feminine creature waiting for him at home, a creature who is dependent upon him for food and clothes and shelter and love, and who is ready with her love and sympathy to smooth away the frowns that business puts on a man's forehead. A man becomes very hard and bitter who does not have a woman to work for, and Horatio Henderson did not wish to grow hard and bitter. There was no alternative unless he learned to love young Hiram. He laughed sneeringly, and the hands that held the paper shook so that the sheet was almost torn in two. Love Hiram Bing-

ham! He would let himself be cooked in boiling oil first.

Marvin was late, and Henderson was already at dinner when his nephew came into the dining room. He grunted something, but Marvin did not hear him; he was staring at the vacant place opposite his uncle.

"Where is Judith?" he asked, as the man pulled out a chair for him.

"Out of town," his uncle growled savagely.

Marvin raised his eyebrows, but said nothing more until the man had brought his soup. "Mrs. Hardwicke wants Judy to take part in her chrysanthemum fête," he said then. "She thinks Judy would make a splendid geisha girl. I shall write to her about it if she is to be away long."

There was no response from his uncle, who picked disdainfully at his fish and grumbled criticism of a Creator who couldn't make such a small animal without filling him so full of scaffolding. Marvin waited for another interval.

"If you will give me Judy's address, I'll drop her a line to-night."

Henderson raised his head and regarded him steadily. "Marvin," he said wearily, "if you had the sense that God gave geese you would understand that I have no intention of giving you Judith's address."

"But——" began Marvin.

"No but at all. I'm not going to run the risk of having that Bingham learn where she is. She has promised me that she won't have anything to do with him for a month; and if you don't know where she is you can't tell."

"I wouldn't tell if I did know," Marvin declared indignantly.

"That may be true or not. I don't know. I've had experiences in the last few weeks which have made me suspicious of everyone, and I'm not taking any chances. If you don't know where Judith is you can't tell," he repeated with a finality which shut Marvin's mouth and made his brain more active.

He kept silent while the salad followed the roast and the crackers and cheese tagged the salad, but he thought a lot. The old man was sore on Judith, and with proper encouragement he would become sorer. If Marvin wanted to own the Henderson Jam and Conserve Factory some day he must do his best to widen the breach between the father and daughter so that it could not be bridged. Marvin felt that, as a maker of family breaches, he could not be surpassed. He looked very thoughtful and sad as he made his plans while his uncle crumbled his crackers and spilled his coffee, and at last, muttering some-

thing unintelligible, rose abruptly and left the room.

Fifteen minutes later Marvin found him walking up and down the library with hurried steps and smoking like a furnace. When Marvin came in Henderson snatched the paper and dropped into a chair with a poor attempt at ease. Marvin lit a cigar very deliberately, walked to the bookcase, and stood before it as if intent on the selection of a volume.

His uncle looked at his back with disfavor.

"Don't let me keep you in to-night," he said gruffly, feeling that, if Marvin should sit there all evening, he would throttle him before bedtime.

"I haven't anything on," Marvin called over his shoulder. He took out a book, looked at it, and put it back. He did this three times, and Henderson's nerves began to quiver.

"Confound it, Marvin," he said testily. "Either take a book or leave 'em alone! You give me the fidgets. What's the matter with you?"

Marvin shut the fourth book, closed the door, and came over to rest his hands on the table and look down at his uncle. "I'm bothered," he said, and he looked bothered. "Perhaps you can help me. Do you think that people prefer to be deceived when they love the deceiver, or would a man rather have his eyes opened and see the truth?

You know——" He would have gone on in a rambling, abstract fashion, but Henderson raised a quick hand.

"What is it you have to tell me of Judith?"

Marvin drew back in shocked surprise. "I didn't say anything of Judith."

"You didn't have her name on your tongue, but it was in your mind. I'm too old a man to be fooled, Marvin. What is it?"

As Marvin hesitated, Henderson thumped the table and jumped to his feet. "I'm not a child!" he thundered. "She hasn't married that Bingham?" His face turned gray and his eyes, which had been so dull, began to sparkle with fury.

"No! no! It isn't that—as far as I know." Marvin qualified his hurried denial. "But I think too much of you, Uncle Horry——"

"Cut out the sentiment, Marvin!" ordered Uncle Horry, his hands opening and shutting spasmodically, the muscles of his face twitching.

Marvin put a curb on his own temper. If his uncle would have it straight, he would give it to him straight. He took out his pocketbook and found a paper, a leaf torn from a notebook. "Young Bingham dropped this at the club the other night," was all he said as he put the paper before his uncle.

Henderson fought a decent impulse to refuse

to look at it, but curiosity proved stronger than fine feeling, and he took it.

"Judith's writing!" he muttered. "My God!"

"Yes, it's Judith's writing," Marvin said very quietly.

"The formula for the King's Jam; Henderson's thirty-first specialty," Henderson murmured under his breath, and his face turned such a pasty color that Marvin was frightened and started to get some brandy. Henderson called him back. "Why did you show this to me?" he asked harshly.

"I thought you should see it," Marvin began glibly. "Judith shouldn't betray your formulas to your competitor. You suspected that it was through her that Bingham got the recipe; you remember you practically accused her, and she hadn't a word to say. When the proof fell into my hands, why, naturally I brought it to you." He felt that the breach was made and that it was an excellent breach; the jam factory was as good as his, for surely hot-headed Horatio Henderson would never forgive Judith this.

Henderson did not speak for some time, but the fingers that held the paper trembled pitifully. At last he looked up and met Marvin's eyes. His own eyes seemed to glow with a flame that grew stronger and brighter as he stared at his nephew until, involuntarily, Marvin stepped back and

drew a deep breath; the flames seemed to scorch him.

Henderson thrust the paper under Marvin's nose. "You brought this to me because you thought I should see it," he began in a voice that shook with passion. "You dirty liar! You brought it to me to make more trouble between me and Judith. Suppose she did tell Hiram Bingham my recipes, sell me out to her lover—suppose she did all that, isn't she still my daughter? Isn't she still your cousin? If you had a thread of honor in your miserable body you would have protected her. You wouldn't have come tattling to me. You—you——" He struggled with a desire to strike Marvin, and tore the paper into shreds and threw them at him. "You get out of here," he said thickly, "or I don't know what I'll do to you!"

CHAPTER XXV

LOUD LAKE is away up on the Canadian boundary and is one of the many bodies of water that do their best to make the line picturesque. It is not as large as Superior, nor yet Huron, but it is of a very good size indeed. On its Canadian shore there is a stretch of virgin pine which makes the mouths of the American settlers water every time they look at it, for they have cleared the southeastern shore almost as clean as the proverbial whistle. To the west there is a rough second growth which makes those same American settlers chafe at the slowness of Nature. If they had their way they would grow thirty feet of pine in a night. There is only one village on the lake—Washington—which is neatly arranged in the cleared section and surrounded by rows and rows of stumps which have sent forth pathetic green branches to prove that there is still life in their old roots. Washington is at the end of a railroad line, and whatever it may be in the future, either a division junction on a great transconti-

nental line or a little way station, it is now the gateway to a sportsman's paradise. There is game in abundance and the lake is full of fish of every size and many varieties. There are even the big sturgeon which produce such excellent imported Russian caviare.

Twenty-five miles from Washington, as the crow flies, is Bingham's island, where Hiram Bingham had built a fishing lodge. He was an ardent fisherman, and went up whenever the jam trade would let him. So it was with a feeling of real envy that he advised his son to try the air of Cloud Lake. He would have gone with him, but the preserve market was not to be trusted in the present crisis.

"If I didn't have to keep my eyes on that viper Henderson," he said venomously. "But I don't trust him the length of my nose. I don't suppose," he continued wistfully, "that you have any idea which we can use for our spring novelty?" He had a feeling that Hiram owed the factory a new and startling combination to pay for the miserable fiasco of the fall.

Hiram shook his head. He wished he had, but he hadn't. He meekly consented to take a package of paper, several packages, and a typewriting machine to Bingham's island and do the very best he could to write the book,"

"The Jams of the World." It was as little as he could do.

"And if you should think of anything for the new jam, don't wait to write, wire," begged his father, who seemed to be a man of but one thought. "It will kill me if that scorpion Henderson gets ahead of us again." He cut the last word short. He hadn't meant to use it. The matter of the King's Jam was over and done with, and he wasn't a man to nag. Hiram must have learned his lesson, a most expensive and disagreeable lesson it had been, and he would be more careful in the future. So Bingham looked apologetic instead of angry, as many fathers would have done.

Again Hiram glanced sadly at his father, who would not understand how impossible it was for a man to compose a conserve when he was the victim of a disappointed love for the daughter of the scorpion Henderson. Nothing he could say would make his father understand, so he promised to wire and not to wait to write.

He took the afternoon train from Waloo, and when it pulled into Washington, the next morning, he sniffed the air gratefully, for it was laden with the breath of Canadian pines. He might well have thought that his coming had been heralded and that a group of prominent citizens was at the station to welcome him, for a large portion of

the population—men, women and children—had gathered on the platform. But Hiram had been in Washington before, and remembered that the arrival of every train was greeted by this same curious-eyed throng.

Hiram was recognized almost immediately, although he had not been in Washington for several years, and his old acquaintances nodded indifferently to conceal the curiosity which almost consumed them. They wondered why he had come north? It was a trifle early for ducks and a trifle late for good fishing. What had brought him to Cloud Lake? The question was in every face, but Hiram did not answer it. Instead he wanted to know where Pete Nelson was.

Nelson had the responsibility of seeing that no one stole Bingham's island when the Binghams were not there. He was a stubborn old bachelor, who had his own ideas of love and women. Huh! But he could broil a fish to perfection, knew what the word "omelet" really meant, and could make a cup of coffee that was coffee. Added to these truly admirable qualities were others; he did not drink, preferred the island to any other place on the footstool, knew more about the habits of fish and game than of human beings, and never wanted any company but his own.

Hiram had telegraphed to him, but as Pete

only visited the village when he pleased there was a chance that he had not received the message, and Hiram would have to depend on the only launch in the village, the property of Swante Anderson, the proprietor of the Waldorf Hotel, president of the bank and Mayor of Washington, for transportation to the island; and as the *Gracie Mae* had a chronic pain in her engine, she was more often to be found in the repair shop than on the lake.

But as Hiram stood on the steps of the little station and sniffed the breath of the pines and talked to Anderson, he saw Pete slouch up the street. He waved his hand, but, if Peter saw him, he made no sign. He grunted when he came nearer, and Hiram called to him. Like the other Washingtonians, he yearned to know what had brought Hiram from Waloo. He groaned when he saw the steamer trunk, the typewriter case, and the suitcase which Hiram pointed out as his personal baggage. "The feller must be plannin' t' spend the rest of his life on Bingham's islan'," he grumbled to the men who were endeavoring to spell out the hotel labels which zealous European porters had attached to Hiram's trunk.

Hiram and Peter left Washington directly after dinner, and, after a fruitless attempt to learn something of the weather, the summer's fishing and

the fall hunting, Hiram abandoned his efforts at conversation and found occupation in his own thoughts as the little launch puffed its way through the lake to Bingham's island, where the lodge looked far larger than the Waldorf Hotel at Washington. It seemed to be at the edge of the world, for from its wide verandas little could be seen but water, unless it was sky, for it was true that there was as much sky as water.

Peter condescended to take the luggage in, while Hiram strolled about to see what changes his father had made. The boathouse had been enlarged to accommodate a new motor boat, and he ran his hands approvingly over her long, slim lines. A couple of canoes were on racks near at hand, there were several rowboats, and a vacant space showed where the gasoline launch which had brought them from the village belonged. Above was a large room with a fireplace, half a dozen big chairs, the sort a man would choose, and cupboards and cases filled with guns in canvas overcoats, and fishing paraphernalia. Hiram nodded his head admiringly; the old dad certainly kept up to date in his amusements and did himself very well, he thought, as he went up to the lodge.

The living room occupied the entire lower floor, for there was a small addition in which were the kitchen and Pete's room. French windows led

onto the porch which ran around the house, and the first thing Hiram did was to open them wide so that the lake breeze could run in and freshen the air. A many-antlered deer's head hung over the huge fireplace, and on the walls between the windows were other specimens of the skill of the fisherman or hunter. There was not much furniture—two big couches, some more huge chairs, and several tables. Hiram cleared one of these, dragged it nearer the window, put his typewriter on it, filled the drawers with paper and notes, and unpacked his guide books and volumes of references. If a man could write a book on the jams of the world anywhere, surely he could do it in this free, airy place.

There was the same feeling of space upstairs, and after inspecting the four bedrooms he made his choice and finished his unpacking. He decided that it would be some time before he packed again. He had not realized how tired he was. He was glad to be on Bingham's island, and he had an idea that he would do some good work there.

After a supper which made him understand why his father put up with Pete's idiosyncrasies, he walked down to the landing to smoke his pipe. There was a hint of acridness in the air which made him sniff knowingly. "Forest fires," he

thought, as he dropped down so that his feet hung over the water and his back was propped against a dock pile. Toward the west the sun, a great, glowing red ball, like a Japanese lantern, was falling into the lake in a mad desire to meet another red ball. He watched them, fascinated, until the two came together. They reminded him of that night at the clubhouse when the moon had coquetted with its reflection in the river—the night Judith had told him that she loved him.

Judith!

He wondered where she was and what she was doing; if she had been able to make any impression on the flinty substance that did Horatio Henderson service as a heart. He didn't believe she had; nor that she ever would. He grew quite depressed as he sat there in the twilight. The world seemed so vast and lonely and damp as it stretched before him. If Judith had really meant what she had said on the *Loafer*, why had she gone away without a word to him? If she was determined not to marry him without her father's consent, the sooner he forgot her the better. He didn't see how he could put her out of his heart or his thoughts, but he could try. And the world grew hollow as well as vast and lonely and damp.

It was very quiet on Bingham's island and the undisturbed atmosphere should have been favor-

able to literary work, but Hiram's book advanced very slowly. In spite of his best efforts his thoughts would stray from the persimmon conserve he had found in Japan, or the orange-flower jam he had eaten in Syria, back to a little blue pot of *Raisinée de France* which he had shared with Judith Henderson at Pontarlier. He spoiled many good sheets of paper by writing nothing on them but "Judith—Judith," instead of wise observations on proper combinations of honey with roseleaves, and sugar with figs.

The summer had been dry and hot and these early fall days were full of the exhilaration which is to be found in northern Minnesota in late September, when the air is like champagne and as full of golden lights. An occasional forest fire changed the sparkling haze to a strange yellow glow and filled the air with smoke, and in some odd way soothed Hiram. It would have annoyed him to have every day beautiful when he felt so forlorn and alone.

He had been on the island three days, and was busy with his notes when suddenly he found it impossible to keep his attention on a conserve made from the seedpods of red roses. He broke off in the middle of a sentence and went out. A soft haze hung low on the water, mysterious and alluring. It allured Hiram, and, crossing over

to the boathouse, he lowered a canoe into the lake and paddled into the mist.

It gave him an odd sensation to make his way through this veil which thinned or thickened unwarningly. Everything was unreal. Hiram felt as if he were in a dream world and he gave himself up to dreams. It was for the last time, he swore. After to-day he would work steadily on the book. But now, in this silent, mysterious world, he would think of Judith.

He drew in his paddle and lounged back on the cushions to build wonderful castles in which he and Judith lived happily with Bingham and Henderson, reconciled and tamed. His imagination was so vivid, so strong, that he actually seemed to see Judith. Why, he heard her singing—a gay little boating song which he used to sing himself in college. He sat up and listened hungrily, his heart thumping. Then he looked wistfully across the water.

Suddenly the mist lifted and he did see her, against the horizon, like a picture on a screen. He saw a girl in a canoe!

"Judith!" he called and caught up his own paddle.

But swiftly as the mist had lifted, it dropped, thicker than before, shutting out the picture which had been so curiously phantom-like. He strained

his eyes to pierce the veil and thrust his paddle into the water. His quick movement turned the canoe, and—in the fog—he did not know which way to go. He called once, twice, three times, but there was no answer, and he stopped, baffled.

"Crazy! Clean crazy!" he muttered, staring at the mist which enveloped him. He felt a thousand times more lonely than before. But he had seen something; you couldn't convince him that he hadn't. It couldn't be Judith, a real girl, so it must have been a vision. He hadn't believed in visions himself, but he knew fellows who did. He had never heard that Cloud Lake was haunted, but doubtless there was a lot about it that he had not heard. He would ask Pete, if he ever saw Pete again, he decided, as he paddled slowly through the mist, which fortunately lightened before him so that after some time he did see Pete again.

And Pete scolded him roundly for being such "a consarned idiot" as to go out on the lake in such a fog. No one with an ounce of brains would do such a reckless thing, he grumbled; for he had been uneasy as to what explanation he would make to Hiram Bingham, senior, if Hiram Bingham, junior, should disappear.

Hiram did not argue about the weight of his brains, but asked at once: "Pete, did you ever

hear that Cloud Lake was haunted?" He laughed consciously as he put the question, which he felt was a very foolish one.

Pete helped him put the canoe on its rack before he answered; and he did not speak as though Hiram was foolish to be interested in haunts. Living alone on an island makes a man believe in many things which would be impossible if he resided on the ground floor of a big city apartment house.

"Sure it's haunted. You haven't forgotten Goose Island? Don't you remember about the old Injun who tied a young buck to the big pine over there because he fell in love with the chief's daughter? He meant to starve him to death. The squaw found out where he was an' started across in her canoe to cut him loose. Just 'fore she got to the islan', a squall come up an' drowned her before her lover's very eyes, an' he died, too. You can't get the Injuns to that part of the lake unless the weather's bright an' clear. They're scared of meeting her on her way to her lover. I dunno as I believe much in such yarns," he scratched his chin. "Do you?" He looked up suddenly at Hiram, who colored a bit.

"Not very much." He remembered that he had heard the story before. It must have been subconsciously projected from the back of his mind

and mixed itself with Judith until he had the impression of a picture from without. There was a psychic explanation, of course, but he did not care for that. He had not realized that he had drifted so near Goose Island. He felt sorry for the Indian lovers, although they had been dead for over a century. Lord, how many love stories had gone wrong! How many parents had been obdurate! His experience was only one of many, but why couldn't they all have run straight and what was to be the end of it? he wondered as he followed Pete into the lodge.

CHAPTER XXVI

IRAM woke the next morning with a very clear idea of what he was going to do. There were to be no dreams to-day. He would work at his notes all the morning, and in the afternoon he would paddle over to Goose Island. And he kept his word. He held his thoughts resolutely on jams until after dinner; and he was again in the canoe when the restless movement of the water and the dancing sunbeams made it impossible for him to think clearly of anything.

Goose Island is no larger than a baseball park, and at one end the basaltic rocks rise up forbiddingly. But Hiram had often played on the island as a boy, and he remembered that to the south there was a little cove from which he could easily clamber to the top, where he would find half a dozen scrub pine trees with their wind-tormented branches and a growth of long grass that the sun and wind had made as dry as tinder. Many years before, when the Indians were lords of that northern land, they had buried their dead on the

island, and a few of the old tombs remained, two or three weather-beaten boxes, silvered with age and raised on stilts. They were on the higher rocks, and when he was a youngster Hiram used to climb up and peer into them and shiver when he saw the dried, bleached bones. He shivered now as he remembered that it was to the big pine by the burial boxes that the Indian lover had been bound. Poor beggar! He had died for love. That might be easier than living without it, he decided sadly, as he retraced his way through the long grass to the other side of the island, which was a favorite spot with Washington picnic parties.

Every stranger who came to the village was brought to Goose Island for a picnic supper before he left. It was the only place of historic interest in the county, and the people made the most of it.

A pile of boulders that made an excellent imitation of a Turkish divan offered Hiram a mute invitation, and he dropped down on them to find that they fitted into the lines of his body as comfortably as the most artfully designed couch would have done. He lit his pipe and looked broodingly off over the dancing water. He watched it until he felt himself yielding to its soothing influence; then, stuffing his pipe into his

pocket, he curled himself into a more comfortable position and was sound asleep in a minute. It was not a restful sleep, for he dreamed, and his dreams were a queer tangle of Judith and the Indian girl, the Indian lover and himself. At last they were all Judith, and he sighed and groaned until he sighed and groaned himself awake, and sat up with a start, to stare at a girl who was standing on a ledge of rock just beyond him, on the other side of a row of scrubby bushes. He rubbed his eyes. It couldn't be that he was "seeing things" a second time. And then he jumped to his feet, for it was a real flesh-and-blood girl.

"Judith!" he cried, and pushed his way through the bushes.

It was fortunate that she did not step backward, or she would have fallen over the bank; but surprise stunned her and kept her motionless. "You!" she had just time to murmur before he had her in his arms and was kissing her eyes, her cheeks, her lips.

"And it *was* you yesterday—in the canoe?" he challenged breathlessly. "And I let Pete make me think it was a ghost! How dared you go out in such a fog? You darling! you dear! Did my wanting you more than anything else in the world materialize you out of the air? Where *did* you come from?"

"Where did *you* come from?" she wanted to know first, and she ran her fingers up and down his sleeve in a tender, possessive manner that thrilled him to his heels.

He told her why, when, and how he had come, and of the book, "The Jams of the World," that he was writing to please his father; and she told him of the compact she had made with her father.

"I didn't want to go away very far, and yet I wanted to be where I wouldn't see anyone. Usually at this season Cloud Lake is deserted. But Mr. and Mrs. Brown are always at Lake View until the lake freezes; so I 'wired' them and came up last week."

Lake View! If he had only used his brains he would have remembered that Horatio Henderson had an island in Cloud Lake just as large and stony as Hiram Bingham's island. Why, they were not ten miles apart! Lake View was more of a summer cottage than Bingham's lodge, but both had been built the same year, and for several seasons the two families had lived on their islands and enjoyed such intimate intercourse that they would have worn ruts between the two islands if ruts could be worn in water. But for the last ten years Henderson had acted as if he had never heard of Cloud Lake, and Lake View had been left to the caretakers, unless Judith

wished to entertain a group of school or college friends. For Henderson did not care for fishing. His nearest approach to it was to lounge in his library with a copy of the first edition of Walton's "The Compleat Angler," for which he had paid a sum which made him blush every time he remembered it. He thought a man showed weakness if he liked to spend a day with a tin can of bait in a boat under a blazing sun when he could buy bigger, better, and cheaper fish from any Indian.

Now that Hiram was positive that Judith was there beside him, Cloud Lake seemed the most natural place in the world for her to have come. He couldn't imagine why he had not thought so before. He had lost three good days, he mourned. If there had been any romance in him he would have been to see the cottage that had been her home, and he groaned as he threw himself down beside her. "I can't believe that it is really you," he murmured.

"I am just as real as you are," she insisted, "and at least five pounds more real than when you saw me last," ruefully. "I am getting disgracefully stout up here. I thought people grew thin and haggard when they were unhappy."

"Have you been unhappy?" He wanted to kill the person who had made her so.

She nodded. "Very unhappy. It hurts me to defy and disappoint father, and yet what can I do? If he had any other reason—but a quarrel between two old men shouldn't come between two young people, should it?"

Most emphatically it should not. The warm touch of his lips told her so unmistakably.

"I was so sorry for him when I came away," she sighed. "He wanted to come with me; but I wish him to have a chance to miss me, to see what it will mean to have me out of his life. I miss him dreadfully. At first I thought I couldn't stand it, that I would have to write to him, at least; but I have a little laboratory at Lake View, a duck of a place. Father fitted it up for me in my sophomore vacation, and I have been making some experiments for him. I feel that, if I can give him a new jam, perhaps he won't be so hard toward us. I paddled over here this afternoon for a short vacation. But you would never believe what I am doing with blueberries," triumphantly.

"Blueberries!" he laughed, as he crushed her hand to his cheek.

"Yes, blueberries," she insisted. "Mrs. Brown put up quantities of them. You know they grow all around the lake—huge blue fellows. I didn't have anything else to work with, but I found an

old recipe book of Mrs. Brown's which gave me an idea. If you weren't connected with Bingham's Jam and Conserve Factory," saucily, "I might tell you what I combine with blueberries."

He put his hands over his ears. "I wouldn't listen! I have secrets of my own which nothing would induce me to divulge to one of the name of Henderson," and they laughed happily because they could now joke over what had once been no joking matter.

His red-brown head was very near her, and as they sat in a happy silence her fingers shyly strayed to caress his hair. Almost as they touched the ruddy locks she snatched them quickly away and brought them to demure order in her lap.

But, light as her touch had been, he felt it and reached up and caught the adventurous fingers. "It won't burn you," he promised, speaking for his red thatch.

She colored adorably. "I'm not so sure of that." For a flame had seemed to leap to her as she touched him.

He watched her for a moment, reveling in the delicious play of color in her face. Then he sprang to his feet and looked eagerly down at her. "Judith," he said quickly, breathlessly,

"why shouldn't we be married at once? To-day? We can go to Washington and get a license and a minister."

She slipped to her feet, too, and her face paled under its coating of tan. She looked like a schoolgirl in her short skirt and many-pocketed coat of khaki. Her eyes, which had danced so merrily, grew sober, and yet she was more vividly alive than Hiram had ever seen her. She made him feel more alive.

"Why can't we be married to-day?" he repeated.

She stepped out of reach of his arms. "I promised father," she said, breathlessly also, "that I wouldn't—not for a month. You wouldn't ask me to break my promise to my father? A month isn't very long," she told him falteringly.

"It's an eternity!" he exclaimed, and caught her in his arms.

"I promised, Hiram; I promised father," she insisted, trying to free herself.

He let her go. "If you promised," he conceded. "Only your father will never consent. Never! But after we are married—I told you what he would do then. And this is such a heavenly place for a honeymoon—our honeymoon!" softly.

"We can come back," she whispered.

"In thirty days? The lake will be frozen solid then."

This was gross exaggeration, for the lake seldom froze until November, and this was only the last of September. But instead of contradicting him, Judith only looked at him helplessly, appealingly, as he stood staring down at the little waves, a frown on his usually good-natured face, and then her fingers touched his arm. "You aren't angry?" Her voice broke, for she did not want to anger him. "You don't ask me to break my promise to my father, dear?"

When she put it that way there was little he could say. He promptly removed the frown from his face. After all, what was a month? Only thirty days. And if they were spent together up here on Cloud Lake, one would fairly run after another.

"No, darling," he said nobly, "I don't ask you to break your promise to your father." And she thought he was the most wonderful man in the universe. "But in thirty days from now you'll find me waiting on your doorsteps—waiting for my wife!"

CHAPTER XXVII

ONDERFUL days followed, ten of them, each more wonderful than the last. In Waloo Hiram and Judith had never been able to meet without sensing a background of prejudice and antagonism; but here there were no quarrels, no rivalries, no jam, and they did their best to forget such things. But they could not be together fifteen minutes before Judith had a plan by which the flinty heart of the senior Bingham could be softened, or Hiram proposed an idea for the subjugation of the adamantine will of Horatio Henderson.

Plans and ideas were heard with dubious shakes of the head, and they always returned to the discussion of the details of the one thing that they were positive would happen: Each would make another appeal to a father, and if that failed—and they knew it would fail—Judith would meet Hiram at the end of the month at St. Thomas's Church, and there would be a wedding—without bridesmaids and ushers, without trousseau, and also, as Judith cleverly pointed out, without the

bothersome "thank you" notes that must result from the reception of bridal gifts.

"That is all right, but your father ought to be ashamed of himself to rob you of the wedding that is every girl's right," Hiram would answer sternly. "I'll bet you have been planning your wedding dress ever since you were old enough to know that all girls expect to wear one. I know how much they think of such things." He looked as wise as Solomon.

"I would like to know where you obtained all your knowledge of girls," she demanded, "you, without the sign of a sister!"

"A fellow usually learns more from other chaps' sisters than he does from his own," Hiram told her triumphantly.

It was not all play and lovemaking. When Judith understood that Hiram had come to Cloud Lake to forget her and to write "The Jams of the World," she insisted that he should keep at least half of this resolution and devote the mornings to literary work while she spent those same hours in the laboratory with Mrs. Brown's blueberries. They would have the rest of the day together, she promised solemnly, and didn't he want to please his father? Hiram acknowledged that he did, and in return he became very punctilious in regard to her parent. Henderson had forbidden

him his house. It is true he had not mentioned Lake View as a proscribed residence, but Hiram knew that the decree of banishment was meant to cover all the real estate on which Henderson paid taxes, and he stubbornly refused to put his foot on Henderson's island. There was really no need. They had the whole big lake and the larger mainland. So after Hiram had conscientiously looked at his typewriter and read his notes for a couple of hours he would go off in the motor boat or canoe and stop at Lake View to pick up Judith.

Sometimes they had supper on one of the islands, where Hiram built the fire and showed Judith what a domestic help he would be. He broiled fish, baked potatoes, and made biscuit with an ease that would have astonished her if she had not been convinced long ago that he could do everything better than anyone else in the world.

As it was between seasons, they seldom met anyone except a stray Indian, who would regard them stolidly as he paddled by. The long hours together in primitive surroundings furnished a splendid opportunity to discover just how compatible they were. They had known ever since Judith had appealed to Hiram for help at Pontarlier that Providence had meant them for each other, and yet they were surprised and delighted a dozen times a day to be confirmed in their knowledge.

They recalled their past, and were amazed to find how much Hiram remembered of the short-skirted, pig-tailed Judith, and she made him flush with delight with her detailed reminiscences of an awkward schoolboy whom she called "Hiram Bingham, junior." If there had been any misunderstandings in the past they were explained and forgiven. Their sky was a beautiful, fair-weather blue with the exception of two rather stormy clouds low on the horizon, and one of these clouds might have been named Horatio Henderson and the other Hiram Bingham.

"Don't let us talk of them," Hiram begged, when they had talked of them for hours. "There isn't anything we can say that we haven't said, and nothing that we can do that will influence them."

"We will have to talk of them some time," Judith sighed. "I suppose we would be too happy if they were not so stubborn and quarrelsome. Even now I am frightened. It doesn't seem as if this blissful time could last," and she shivered.

He put his arm around her and drew her closer to him as he sat at the wheel of the motor boat. "Cold, honey? You mustn't get a chill. As for being too happy, don't you worry your dear head about that. It's natural for you to worry over your father; Heaven knows my old man is on my

mind a good bit. But just trust to time and love. That's all we can do."

"Time and love," she repeated, and snuggled closer to him. "It's a big combination, isn't it, Hiram?"

"The biggest in the world," he told her, smiling into the face that looked so pale in the moonlight. Her eyes were as bright as the stars above, even if there were tears in them. He bent quickly to kiss them away. Her arm went around his neck, and for a moment he held her to him. "You're cold, dear," he said as he released her. "I must take you home."

But when they stopped at the Lake View dock she did not want to leave him. "It's too beautiful to last," she repeated wistfully. "Suppose something should happen to separate us, Hiram?" Her eyes were as big as saucers.

"Silly Billy! Suppose the lake was apple sauce! You are cold. Run in and have Mrs. Brown give you something hot to drink. I won't keep you out so late again. Go to sleep and dream of me."

"I will," she promised solemnly, waving a hand that shook with the chill as he turned his boat toward Bingham's island. It was not necessary to ask her to do that. Didn't she always dream of him?

CHAPTER XXVIII

HEY were on an exploring expedition, Judith, Hiram, and the motor boat. At dinner that day Fate had moved Pete to tell Hiram of an island which the latter had never seen nor even heard of. According to Pete's description, it was a rocky little circlet inclosing a tiny lake, clear as the sky above it. It was called the "Tear of Manitou," or the "Doughnut," according to whether the speaker was an Indian or a white man. Pete had never seen it, and his directions as to its location were so vague that it occurred to Hiram that it would be good sport to take Judith on a hunt for it.

"And when we find it we'll rechristen it. The Indians may call it the 'Tear of Manitou' if they choose, but the whites have got to exchange the title of 'Doughnut' for that of the 'Wedding Ring' if Pete's description is correct," he declared.

It was good sport to hunt for the island. They made four landings before they found the proper

place and discovered that Pete had given a fairly accurate description of it, for it was small, it was rocky, and it inclosed a tiny lake, clear as the sky above it.

"Battleships are christened with champagne, so I see no reason why ginger ale should not be used in renaming an island." Hiram handed Judith a bottle of that popular beverage which he took from the generously filled luncheon basket in the boat. "Break it on that rock and say, 'I name thee Wedding Ring,'" he commanded.

Judith obligingly did as she was told, and as the glass splintered against the rock and the pale brown liquid foamed over the stone she gave the island its new name. "I hope my wedding ring will not be so misshapen," she smiled, as she looked down from their high position on the irregular outline.

"Whether it is or not, you will adore it because it is your wedding ring," Hiram wisely assured her.

"I wonder?" she questioned. "I suppose that is one of the bits of information you picked up from the sisters of the other fellows," she added scornfully.

"Judith," he said, as sternly as he could, "you must not forget that I went around the world to gather information, and I did not confine myself

exclusively to jams and preserves. I learned several other things. I may honestly say several of several other things. You will doubtless hear of all of them in time," he promised generously. "Now, to go on with the ceremony." And in a wonderful speech and with great dignity he claimed the newly named "Wedding Ring" as the property of Cupid, his heirs and assignees forever. "We should have a flag," he said when he had finished his well-rounded sentences.

Judith gave him her blue tie, which he fastened to a branch broken from the one bush which had found a footing between the rocks. Then he planted the standard with much ceremony and whistled "The Star-Spangled Banner," "God Save the King," "The Marseillaise," and "The Watch on the Rhine." He would have whistled other national airs to show how universal is Cupid's sovereignty, but he did not know any more, and neither did Judith.

"And now for supper," he said when the ceremony was over. "Considering all we have done for it, I must say that the 'Wedding Ring' is not very hospitable. There isn't wood enough here to make a cup of coffee, and scarcely a rock horizontal enough to sit on while we drink it."

"Let us go over to Goose Island for supper," she suggested. "I love that place where we met

the other day. I would like to have our supper there."

"You shall have it there. Don't I live to please you?" If there was exaggeration in his tone there was truth in his words, and Judith put her hand under his arm and they went down to the boat together, leaving the blue flag of Cupid fluttering from the rocks above.

"Hiram," she said, as they sped toward Goose Island, and she bent forward, her hands clasped tightly on her knees, "do you ever think what might have happened if I had not been on that night train for Paris? Or if you hadn't been there? It makes me shiver just to imagine such a thing."

"Don't shiver and don't worry. I should have found you somewhere and somehow. At the same time I will admit that I owe a little bunch of gratitude to the smuggler for bringing us together so expeditiously. And to the pig-eyed one of the Pontarlier *duane*. I should like to send him a handsome present, a cake of milk chocolate wrapped in silver, perhaps. If he hadn't been so uncivil, you might never have noticed me. God bless the pig-eyed one!" piously. "Here we are at our dining room. Do you want to run up while I make the boat fast?"

She preferred to wait for him, and when the boat had been made fast they clambered up the rocks to the nook where they had met such a short time before.

Hiram began to unpack the basket when he heard voices. "Company for supper!" he whispered. "Who do you suppose it is?"

"Oh, dear!" Judith's voice did not sound hospitable. "I thought we would be by ourselves."

"Keep still and they may go down the other way. They must have landed at the south cove."

She nodded; but silence did not serve them.

"You will get a more extended view from this point, one that gives a better idea of the size of the lake." It was a pompous, masculine voice that spoke.

"It sounds like Swante Anderson and a personally conducted party," Hiram whispered in disgust. "Wouldn't you suppose you would be safe from trippers here?"

Whatever her suppositions might be, the two were not safe, for it was Swante, and he was followed by Mrs. Swante, two traveling men from the hotel, and Mr. Moore, the editor of the "Washington Gazette," with Mrs. Moore, and Mrs. Moore's sister, a girl from Illinois, and they all were much surprised to see Hiram Bingham and Judith Henderson.

"Mr. Bingham!" Swante recognized him first, although, ostrich-like, Hiram had dropped his head and turned his back in the hope of remaining undiscovered. "Fine day, isn't it? Goose Island is a great place to come to."

"Why, it's Miss Henderson!" The editor beamed at Judith, who was trying to conceal herself behind a rock. "I didn't know you were here. Why didn't you send me word so that I could make an item for the *Gazette?*" with ponderous playfulness.

"An item!" Judith was startled. "It is hardly worth the space, Mr. Moore," she added hurriedly.

"Perhaps not in your estimation, Miss Henderson, but the readers of the *Gazette* will be interested. Is your father with you?"

"Oh, no!" She glanced quickly at the man who was with her, and if she could she would have fled with him away from the keen editorial eye which saw her only as an item.

It was Anderson, not Hiram, who came to her aid. "Well, too bad you didn't come earlier. We have had our supper, and, as these gentlemen are going to leave on the evening train, we must start back," and he deftly subtracted his guests, who were staring at Judith, fascinated.

They had heard something of the Bingham-Henderson feud in the course of their travels, and they were much interested in this meeting. They would like to have learned more about it, but Anderson herded them down to the *Gracie Mae*, whose malady was so alleviated that she had been able to bring them from Washington. Whether she would be able to take them back to the village they would never know until they reached the Washington dock.

Judith was silent as she watched the *Gracie Mae* as long as she could see her, and she left the preparations for supper entirely to Hiram.

"Why so pensive?" He touched her shoulder to remind her that he was there. She seemed to have forgotten his presence. "You look as if your Eden had been invaded."

"That is just the way I feel," she said; "as if a horrid, slimy snake had crawled into our paradise!"

He looked surprised, but he answered jokingly: "Poor old Moore! Or was it Swante you cast for the serpentine rôle? But forget them, and watch me cook these partridges. Pete got them this morning from an Indian."

She watched him cook the birds, but she did not forget the editor of the *Washington Gazette* nor the traveling men, and after a time Hiram

left her alone. He didn't mind a little silence himself occasionally. So he was satisfied after supper to sit beside Judith and smoke his pipe until suddenly she jumped to her feet.

"We must go home," she said abruptly. "I told you, Hiram Bingham," she went on almost passionately, "that this was too beautiful to last!"

CHAPTER XXIX

HE most beautiful day that was ever made greeted Hiram when he went out on the veranda after breakfast. It was a sin to waste any of it on "The Jams of the World," but he knew his Judith by this time, and after her peculiar manner the previous evening he did not dare to go over before afternoon. So he went in and worked on another chapter of "The Jams of the World" until it was time for him to start for Lake View. He had Pete put him up a luncheon, for he planned to take Judith for a tramp through the Canadian pines, and he smiled all the way to Lake View and the lake laughed with him, little ripples of joy spreading all over the surface. What a day it was!

For the first time Judith was not waiting for him on the landing, and he wondered idly what had detained her as he blew his whistle. Perhaps it was the blueberries, he chuckled. He was sure it was the blueberries when Mrs. Brown came out of the cottage instead of Judith. Women had no idea of time. He would probably have to wait

until the fruit boiled or cooled, and he did not want to waste a second of the most beautiful day that was ever made on jam. He wished Judith would hurry. Golden moments were flying.

"Good morning, Mrs. Brown," he called gaily. "You can't find any fault with this day."

"I'm not going to try to, Mr. Bingham," she answered sedately. "Miss Judith asked me to give you this," and she held out a letter. Hiram stared at it. "There isn't any answer," she added. "Yes, it is a fine day; but it's what I call a weather breeder. Best not go too far, Mr. Bingham," and she turned back to the cottage.

Hiram looked at the cottage, at the windows that he knew were Judith's, and then at the letter. What did it mean? he asked himself as he tore the envelope open. He read the letter twice, and then he looked at the cottage again. Godfrey! what queer creatures girls were! And he read the letter for the third time.

"My dear, dear, dear boy," Judith had written, and her penmanship showed that she had composed it hurriedly and under great stress of mind.

"I am not going out with you to-day. You laughed when I said that I felt those people from Washington were serpents who had invaded our Eden, but it is true. They opened my eyes to

things I should have thought of before, but I haven't been able to think of anything but you. And then when I came home there was a letter from father which made me feel that it is not fair to him for me to meet you as I have been doing when he does not know that you are here. He thinks that I haven't seen you since that night on the *Loafer*, and he thanked me for it. He said that he could always trust me to be fair and honest, that I had been that way ever since I was a little girl. And when he wrote that I was probably with you! I should have written to him as soon as I met you on Goose Island, but I didn't. I never thought of it. But I have written to him now; told him that you are here and that I see you every day. I can defy him, dear, but I can't deceive him. He is sure to hear from some one. Mr. Moore said he was going to put an item in the *Gazette*—and those traveling men! It will be far better for him to learn it direct from me. Suppose Marvin should tell him? You know Marvin."

Hiram bit his lip. He did know Marvin, and he realized what beautiful whole cloth for a story the situation would be for Marvin Cullen. She was right. It wouldn't be well for them to let Marvin carry the tale of their daily meetings on Cloud Lake to Horatio Henderson.

"Father might think then that I had come North to meet you, that we had planned to be

together here. And we know we did nothing of the sort. I would do anything in the world, Hiram Bingham, but give you up to keep on good terms with my father. Why, he was all I had until you came to me. And just because I know he has not been fair to me is no reason why I shouldn't be square with him. It is just until he knows. After that we can go about as we have been doing, but until he knows—— Do understand, dear, and don't think me sillier than you have to. It is because I love you both so much that I don't want anything more to come between us. I don't want father to have a chance to say things that I couldn't forgive. So be good to me, dear, and don't come until I send for you. It won't be long. Perhaps I will hear from father immediately, and when I do I will let you know. But one thing you may be sure of, and that is that I love you, love you, and when the month is up I will marry you as we planned.

"Oh, I do love you! Your JUDITH."

Hiram had an impulse to dash up to the cottage and tell Judith that her letter was utterly foolish, that there would be only one answer to her confession to Horatio Henderson. Her father would take the first train for Cloud Lake and try to carry her away, as he had tried to before; and Hiram might not be able to find her as easily as he had traced the *Loafer*. And she had broken to flinders his beautiful plan for the most beau-

tiful day ever made. Mrs. Brown was right. It had been a weather breeder and the storm had come. He pitched the luncheon that Pete had packed so carefully into the lake and backed his boat away from the landing.

And Judith, behind her curtain, watched him until he was out of sight and wondered if he would ever know how much she loved him and how hard it had been for her to refuse to join him on this most beautiful day that ever was made.

CHAPTER XXX

T suited Hiram's mood the next morning to find that the smoke from the forest fires was heavier than it had been, that it had swept beyond the mainland and hung over the lake. The sunlight filtered through it, making everything a sickly, bilious yellow. But it suited Hiram as he sat frowning over his work until at last the smoke became so thick and acrid that it stung his nostrils. He broke off in the middle of a description of a melon jam which is indigenous to Turkey and pushed his papers aside and went out.

Pete had gone over to Washington in the launch for the mail and supplies, and Hiram was alone on the island. He was astonished at the change a few hours had made. The smoke was now a dense curtain which shut the mainland off completely, and the off-shore wind was carrying the burning brands far out to let them fall into the lake with a sharp hiss.

It looked very bad to Hiram as he stood there on the landing. The village, twenty-five miles

away and in the center of a well-cleared district, was scarcely in any danger, but there were settlers in the brush, and as he stood and watched the smoke and the burning brands he found that he must go nearer to learn what the danger was. He got out the motor boat to run to the shore to see if there was anyone he could help. The air grew heavier and more oppressive, and before he had gone a mile a dense column of smoke rose up, seemingly from the water, and without a second's hesitation he increased his speed toward it. Lake View was in that direction. But of course Judith was perfectly safe there with the Browns. Nevertheless, he went to her as fast as he could in spite of her request that he should stay away until she heard from her father.

His mouth set in a firm line as he saw that the column of smoke was broken by red tongues of flame. He managed to get a little more speed from his engine. Possibly a burning brand had been carried to Lake View by the wind. His fear became a reality almost immediately, for as he sighted the island the house burst into flames. The whole top of the low, rambling structure was on fire at once; so was the boathouse, and even the trees crackled and burst into a blaze.

"It won't last three minutes," Hiram thought in a panic. And then he caught the flutter of a

woman's skirts and steered straight for the shore, avoiding the pier, which was already afire.

Judith stood dumb and appalled before the burning house. Her face was smudged with smoke, and sparks had burned more than one hole in her linen gown. She held a garden hose from which a thin stream of water trickled.

Hiram called to her as he jumped from the boat, and she swung around.

"You!" she cried breathlessly and swayed.

He thought she was going to faint, but she pulled herself together. "You must get away from here at once," he ordered. "Where are the Browns?" He took the hose from her and threw it aside.

"They went over to Washington. I was alone in the laboratory." She remembered what she had been doing in the laboratory and started toward the house. "I must get that jar," she murmured.

He barred the way. "Where are you going?"

"I must get the blueberries. I have the right combination at last—just what father wants. It's for the spring jam."

"Jam!" repeated young Bingham, and he looked at the house where the roof was falling in. "Jam!" Then he caught her in his arms and staggered with her to the boat, for she was a

solid if sweet armful. "*Jam!*" he said again as he put her down and pushed the boat out into the lake. "You can't do a thing here, and it's suicide to stay."

As he spoke a spark fell on her shoulder. She winced at the sting of the fire, and he took his sweater and dipped it into the lake and threw it over her head and shoulders.

"Don't breathe this fire and smoke. Keep your head covered," he commanded, as the boat flew away from the island that was now a seething furnace.

She pushed back the sweater to look once more on what had been her home, but she did not whimper nor cry. "Where are we going?" It seemed as if there were no way out of this world of fire and smoke; that it was useless to try to escape from it.

"We will go over to our island." He peered through the unnatural darkness. "We can get shelter there." He did not tell her that what he really wanted was gasoline. He had not filled the tank before he started, and he was afraid there was not enough in it to carry them to Washington.

"Suppose it should be burned?"

He smiled reassuringly. "It was all right half an hour ago."

But much may happen in half an hour, and when he gave a short, sharp exclamation she pushed the sweater farther back and looked at Bingham's. It was ablaze as Henderson's had been.

The flames frightened her now, and with a sob that she tried to stifle she drew nearer to Hiram and put out her hand. "Oh!" she cried with a catch in her breath. "Is all the world on fire?"

He slipped an arm around her and drew her to him. She nestled closer, feeling safer when she could hear the strong, steady beat of his heart under her cheek. He had slowed the boat, and was considering whether he dared to attempt a dash to the gasoline tank. He regretfully dismissed the idea as a wall of flame broke out between him and it.

"We can't stop here," he said quickly, for the heat from the flames was scorching them. "We will make for the town. We are in luck to have this boat. Thank Heaven I got to you in time!" His voice was hoarse and strained, and he crushed her in his arms and kissed her passionately. Suppose he hadn't reached her? The very thought made his spine chill while she was white as milk and clung to him sobbingly.

The boat shot away from the island. Perhaps they had enough gasoline to take them to Wash-

ington. They would have to chance it, and there was a pair of oars under the seat. Anyway, they were together; that was the great thing to be thankful for. He increased the speed, and the boat disappeared in the smoke.

CHAPTER XXXI

N the dock at Washington, twenty-five miles away, two red-faced men stood staring across the water. As Hiram had prophesied, Henderson had bought a ticket North as soon as he read Judith's letter. He understood perfectly, as he did so, why Sidney Smith had wished for a one-eyed daughter, that he might avoid the plague of her suitors. He had never imagined that a girl could cause her father the annoyance that Judith had caused him. He would go to her, and, if he talked plainly and sensibly and did not lose his temper, surely she would listen to him, and perhaps he might release her from the baleful spell that young Bingham had cast over her. He could but try. When he saw his former partner in the sleeper at the Waloo station he turned his back disdainfully and groaned inwardly. Was he never to be out of the sight or hearing of the Binghams? Bingham, who was on his way to keep the promise he had made to spend the week-end with Hiram, looked through Henderson as through a pane of cheap glass.

They were still poison to each other in the morning when the train pulled through miles of smoke-filled air to the Washington station, and the travelers stepped out into a sickly, bilious world to hear that the shore line of the lake was ablaze and that never in the memory of the oldest inhabitant had there been such a threatening forest fire. Bingham ran to the landing as fast as he could; so did Henderson. They forgot their enmity in their anxiety, and for the first time in fifteen years they voluntarily talked to each other.

There was not a boat to be had in the town but a leaky old scow which would not have carried them into water deep enough to drown them. The *Gracie Mae* was in the repair shop, of course, her engine in pieces, and Swante Anderson and a dozen other men had impressed the Bingham and Henderson launches into service, and Pete and Brown had been obliged to obey orders. Although Washington was protected by a stretch of cleared ground and the wind was west, these Northern people had learned that with a forest fire the unexpected is very apt to happen. There was nothing that either Bingham or Henderson could do but wait.

"My God!" muttered Henderson, staring vainly into the yellow light which grew thicker and more bilious-looking every minute. "To think of Judith

out in that hell! You never knew Judith?" He turned abruptly to his bitterest enemy. "The dearest, sweetest, cleverest daughter a man ever had!" he sobbed.

Bingham put a shaking hand on his shoulder and brushed the other over his smarting eyes. "And my boy!" huskily. "A son in a thousand! He has never given me a moment's anxiety. He's all I have and I can't lose him!"

The forced inaction drove them almost mad. The reserve of age was broken down; their old enmity was forgotten; and they babbled of things they would blush to remember under normal conditions. The yellow haze gave them a livid appearance, and their eyes were red-rimmed—from the smoke, perhaps.

They were limp and ill with fear when Henderson gave a cry and collapsed weakly against Bingham's shoulder. Bingham looked in the direction of the shaking hand and saw a boat coming slowly, laboriously to the dock. The two men jumped to their feet, crying and shouting, and the tears ran down their faces as they stumbled to the landing.

Henderson seized his daughter as Hiram helped her out, and hugged her fiercely, while Bingham put his arm around his son's shoulders and sawed the air with his other hand.

They could only grin foolishly, all except Judith, who wept softly and comfortably on her father's shoulder.

"I say!"—young Bingham's voice was not quite so clear and musical as usual—"we're all right, although it was a tight shave. The boat caught fire twice. Miss Henderson was a trump. A trump!" emphatically. "I say, father!" striking the iron while it was in its most molten stage, "you should be much obliged to Miss Henderson. If it hadn't been for her I would have burned to ashes with the manuscript of 'The Jams of the World.'"

"And if it hadn't been for Mr. Bingham,"—Judith dabbed her eyes and looked at her father a bit defiantly—"I would have blown up with the new jam."

Henderson hugged her again. "If that is true there is nothing I have that is too good for him!" he exclaimed extravagantly.

Young Hiram flushed. He had never let much grass grow under his feet, and none had a chance even to sprout now. "I hope you mean that, Mr. Henderson," he said, with disconcerting quickness, "for I want you to give me your greatest treasure."

Her father drew in his breath with a sharp, hissing sound and looked from the young man to the young woman. His father drew in his breath

with a sharp, hissing sound and looked from the young woman to the young man. As they were men of average intelligence, they understood at once what he meant.

"Bless my soul!" was all that either could utter, and they chorused that very feebly. The defiance, the hatred, the rivalry, indeed, all the old disagreeable feelings had been burned out by fear and anxiety, and nothing was left except love and gratitude. They were in a condition in which they could do nothing except murmur feebly: "God bless my soul!"

"Thank you! Thank you! Then that is all right." Hiram grasped a hand of each and shook it vigorously. "Now that is settled I am sure that we shall all be as happy as kings—and queens," with a radiant smile for Judith. "Let us go up to the hotel and see if we can get something to eat. It must be at least a month since I had a bite. I am sure that my fiancée needs sustenance."

And he boldly took her from her father, but not before she had kissed not only Henderson but Bingham, too. And then Hiram had to kiss her before he led her up Main Street to the Waldorf Hotel, while the two fathers, dazed and bewildered, meekly followed, wishing that some one would kindly pinch them so that they might know if they

were in a real world or in a moving-picture film.

They were still dazed and bewildered when they found themselves at the table in the Waldorf dining room, where Hiram had persuaded some one to give them food. Hiram kept up a cheerful chatter, telling Henderson and Bingham of the mad dash they had made through the smoke and emphasizing Judith's courage and common sense, regardless of the stunned faces of the men and the blushes of Miss Henderson. He explained that he and Judith had been in love for ages, although they had agreed to sacrifice their love to the often-expressed and well-known enmity of their fathers. But Fate, he added, had planned otherwise and burned up two perfectly good islands to bring them together. "And so," he concluded happily, "we are going to be one joyous family from now on. No more rivalries, no more jealousies over jam or anything else; nothing but peace, good will, and love—and the greatest of these is love!"

He was passing Miss Henderson the mint sauce as he spoke, and her shaking hands could not hold the bowl, so that it fell with a splash, emptying its contents into a dish of spiced apples that the waitress had just placed on the table.

Henderson and Bingham had listened in silence. They were beginning to feel ashamed of the hys-

terical exposure of emotions and thoughts which had taken place on the dock, and were uncomfortably self-conscious at the strange position in which they were placed. But as they saw the apples float in the mint sauce the world righted, and, as though moved by a single impulse, they sprang to their feet.

"The spring jam!" they cried in excited unison. "Mint apples!"

"We will put it out together," Hiram promised at once, "as we did the King's Jam," and he actually dared to smile at both Bingham and Henderson and to squeeze Judith's hand. Henderson and Bingham frowned. They felt that Hiram had introduced a false note, and they scarcely heard him as he went on, his eyes on his fiancée, who was making a very poor attempt to eat her dinner. "Ever since that day at Pontarlier I have known that I needed your help in the jam business."

"Pontarlier?" mumbled Mr. Henderson. "That is the name of the Smyths' French cousin."

Judith laughed softly, and now she dared to explain that Pontarlier was not the name of the Smyths' French cousin, but of a town on the French frontier, and with Hiram's help she told them of her experience on the night express from Lausanne to Paris.

"Why didn't you tell me that before?" grumbled her father.

"I don't know," she answered truthfully.

He looked at her as though he never would understand the ways of women. "H-m! I am glad that an American was there to look after you," was all he said.

"And I am glad that I was the American," young Hiram answered most emphatically. "The King's Jam has caused a little unpleasantness," he admitted, "but it has also brought compensation, big compensation. It is a good jam, a corking good jam! I don't care who made it. And now we will make other jams. We will control the jam market of the world."

The words excited the two old jam makers. It was what each had dreamed of. The jam market of the world! A combination of Henderson's and Bingham's might do it, and they settled down to a discussion of ways and means while Judith slipped away, Hiram at her heels.

There was no one in the stuffy hall, and he caught her in his arms. "I have loved you ever since I saw you in the train at Lausanne and I will love you to my dying day!" he assured her solemnly.

She clung to him with a little laugh that ended

in a little sob. "Oh, I thought it would never come right!"

He turned her face up so that he could look into her eyes, which were almost black and as deep as Cloud Lake itself. "Pooh!" he spoke lightly because he felt so strongly. "Did you have such a small opinion of yourself as to think I would let anyone keep me from you?"

"I hoped you wouldn't," she confessed as he kissed her, and her arms tightened about his neck.

THE END

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